ASTWOOD
STRATEGY CORPORATION

DISCUSSION PAPER

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A summary of key findings from the Safe City Mississauga/Brampton Safe City Community and Stakeholder Survey on Youth Gangs

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SECTION 1

INTRODUCTION

On behalf of Astwood Strategy Corporation, Safe City Mississauga (SCM) and Brampton Safe City (BSC), I am pleased to present our final report from the SCM/BSC community and stakeholder survey and facilitated consultation in support of the development of a comprehensive youth/street gang strategy for the Peel Region.

As SCM/BSC is aware, the Department of Justice funding secured for the purposes of this strategy development contemplated two lines of enquiry, including a pre-consultation survey of community and stakeholders, as well as a two-day consultation facilitated by Astwood. This report includes, in Section 2, a reprint of the previous findings derived from the pre-consultation surveys, and in Section 3, a report of findings arising from the consultation. Section 4 presents a range of recommendations for consideration by SCM and BSC.

We wish to express our appreciation to the members of the Working Committee who have supported this important exercise. As well, we owe a debt of gratitude to the Safe City Mississauga team, who have worked tirelessly to ensure the survey instruments reached the broadest possible audience and that the two-day consultation was well organized and efficient for staff, speakers and delegates alike.

SECTION 2

SURVEY RESPONSE AND ANALYSIS

The following is a summary of results from the Community Survey (Section 2.1) and Stakeholder Survey (Section 2.2). Section 2.3 presents implications and an array of discussion items that were considered for the March 27/28, 2013 consultation.

2.1   COMMUNITY SURVEY

There were a total of **540** respondents in aggregate, with variable response to each question as shown below:

Response Level by Question		
Question	**Total Respondents**	**Response %**
1. How long have you resided in Peel Region?	536	99.3
2. Please check your gender.	537	99.4
3. Please check your age range.	534	98.9
4. Where do you live?	526	97.4
5. How would you describe your understanding of the youth gang situation in Peel?	538	99.6
6. Your perspectives on youth gangs.	469	86.9
7. Causes of the gang problem in Peel	467	86.5
8. Preventing youth involvement in gangs	468	86.7
9. What would you like community leaders and others to do about the youth gang situation in Peel?	304	56.3
10. In what ways, if at all, do you feel impacted by gang violence in Peel?	283	52.4
11. Final comments or thoughts.	219	40.6
Discussion/Commentary: Taking into account questions 1 through 8, there was a median response of rate of 509. There are approximately 810,000 citizens in Peel over the age of 20, which represents fully 96.3% of this sample. At a 95% confidence level, this represents a confidence interval of 4.34% (or stated differently, +/- 4.34% 19 times out of 20). The sample for this survey was not purposely selected and therefore we cannot guarantee that it is representative of the Peel Region as a whole.		

With respect to questions in the survey that provided a Likert scale (e.g., Questions 6/7/8, "Strongly agree" ⇔"Strong disagree"), this scale was converted to a numerical equivalent (e.g., "Strongly agree" = 5, "Strong disagree" = 1). Responses were then summed and divided by total respondents (e.g., those answering question less those who replied "Don't Know") to render an average score out of 5, with response choice results closest to 5 representing the strongest level of agreement within the sample. Respondent commentary to open ended questions (items 9/10/11) was imported into the analytical application NVivo and analyzed to identify key themes. A full text of comments can be found in Astwood's March 6, 2013 Discussion Paper provided to SCM/BSC and the project working group.

1. How long have you resided in the Peel Region?		
Answer Options	**Response Percent**	**Response Count**
Under one year	2.2%	12
1 to 3 years	3.5%	19
3 to 5 years	5.0%	27
5 to 10 years	13.4%	72
10+ years	78.7%	406
answered question		**536**

Discussion/Implications:
As the data demonstrates, almost 80% of respondents are long-term (+ 10 year) residents of the Peel Region, and therefore we may conclude that they may be reasonably knowledgeable in respect to the issues that affect the region. Including those who have lived in Peel for greater than 5 years, 92% of the sample has lived in Peel for more than 5 years.

2. Please check your gender		
Answer Options	**Response Percent**	**Response Count**
Female	67.2%	361
Male	32.8%	176
answered question		**537**

Discussion/Commentary:
As the data demonstrates, women predominate in the sample. Since the demographics of Peel are roughly equivalent in terms of gender distribution, this result confirms again that the sample is not representative of the entire Peel community.

IMPLICATIONS/PROSPECTIVE CONSULTATION DISCUSSION ITEMS:
- *Additional efforts must be expended to gather opinion from men, as they are under-represented in the sample.*

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3. Please check your age range.		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Under 19	3.0%	16
20 to 30	12.0%	64
31 to 40	18.0%	96
41 to 50	39.1%	209
51 to 60	15.2%	81
60+	12.7%	68
	answered question	534

Discussion/Commentary:

As the data demonstrates, the age profile is diverse with approximately 50% of the sample representing the age cohort of 31 to 50. While we do not know to what extent do respondents in this age cohort have families, we can reasonably assume that the majority of our respondents likely have children and indeed, may potentially be the most affected or concerned by the youth/street gang situation in Peel.

IMPLICATIONS/PROSPECTIVE CONSULTATION DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- *Youth voice has not been heard, suggesting additional efforts to gather opinion from youth in the community*

4. Where do you live?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Mississauga	71.3%	375
Brampton	26.4%	139
Caledon	2.3%	12
	answered question	526

Discussion/Commentary:

As the data demonstrates, the majority of respondents live within the City of Mississauga, which is indeed the largest city within Peel (by population). Brampton is relatively well represented, but Caledon is not, which again confirms that the sample is not representative of the whole region.

IMPLICATIONS/PROSPECTIVE CONSULTATION DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- *Greater efforts must be expended to reach citizens of Caledon to ensure any policy direction takes into account their unique needs and circumstances.*

5. How would you describe your understanding of the youth gang situation in Peel?		
Answer Options	**Response Percent**	**Response Count**
Excellent	3.7%	20
Very Good	13.2%	71
OK	34.0%	183
Not Very Good	35.1%	189
Poor	7.4%	40
I Don't Know	6.5%	35
	answered question	**538**

Commentary:

As the data demonstrate, approximately 51% of the sample have "OK" to Excellent knowledge of the gang situation in Peel, with 49% indicating "Not Very Good", "Poor" or "Don't Know".

IMPLICATIONS/PROSPECTIVE CONSULTATION DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- *We must take great caution in interpreting these results or using them to inform public policy, since approximately have of the sample has little to no knowledge on the youth/street gang situation.*
- *Additional efforts are warranted to help educate Peel residents about gang issues.*
- *For future surveying, we should consider a "two stream" survey, wherein those indicating that they have "OK" to "Excellent" knowledge of the gang issue are presented with a full panel of questions that pre-suppose a certain level of knowledge, and where those with "Not Very Good" to "Poor" knowledge being directed to a different set of questions that attempt to probe items such as the possible concern about gang issues, the extent to which they wish to learn more about gang issues, etc.*

6. Perspectives on Youth Gangs	Score
To respond to youth gangs, we need to increase our efforts to prevent youth from joining gangs.	4.49
To respond to youth gangs, we need a greater reintegration (post-custody release support) response (e.g., housing, employment, coping skills, alternative school, etc.)	4.20
I am personally concerned about the youth gang situation in Peel.	4.04
To respond to youth gangs, we need a greater diversion (e.g., refer you to programs rather than arrest and charge) and intervention response.	4.02
The youth gang situation in Peel is growing in size and severity.	3.93

Within the Peel Region, there is visible evidence of youth gang activity.	3.62
With respect to youth justice issues, youth gangs are the most pressing one in Peel.	3.54
To respond to youth gangs, we need a greater police suppression (e.g., street checks, patrols) and enforcement response.	3.47
Community safety has been reduced in the past 10 years because of youth gangs operating in and around my community.	3.45
The Peel Regional Police Service/Caledon OPP are well equipped and prepared to deal with youth gangs and youth gang members.	3.06
In Peel, we do a good job educating youth about the dangers of youth gangs and gang violence.	2.70
There is sufficient money available in Peel to respond to youth gangs.	2.62
As a community, we have adequate programs services to address youth gangs in Peel.	2.46
I have been victimized, directly or indirectly, by youth gang violence or youth criminal activity.	2.38
Schools and educators are well equipped and prepared to deal with youth gangs and youth gang members.	2.29
Parents/caregivers of Peel youth have a good level of awareness about youth gang issues.	2.26

Commentary:

As the data demonstrate, respondents strongly agree that increased prevention and reintegration support are key to Peel's response to gangs, which respondents also agree is of concern to them. There is also agreement that more diversion approaches need to be employed, and that the gang situation is growing in size and severity. Only moderate levels of agreement are demonstrated in respect to the priority of youth gang issues (relative to other youth crime issues) and that more police suppression is required. Respondents are essentially undecided in respect to the readiness of local police agencies to respond to gangs. Moderate disagreement was expressed in related to the availability of money and programs to respond to gang issues, the extent to which schools/educators are equipped to handle gangs, and the extent of awareness of parents in regards to youth gang issues.

IMPLICATIONS/PROSPECTIVE CONSULTATION DISCUSSION ITEMS:
- *Emphasis of prevention and reintegration versus suppression*
- *Strong and visible response required to provide sense of confidence to community that community partners are responding appropriately to a perceived growing problem*
- *Improve manner in which police services articulate their gang response*
- *Conduct community inventory of program and services to determine capacity to address youth gang issues*

- *Create materials, resources and programming to better equip schools to address gang issues (e.g., police, procedures, integrated threat assessment, gang activity suppression with SROs, etc.)*
- *Create awareness materials and resources for parents*

7. Youth Gang Drivers	Score
Lack of family connection or family breakdown.	4.22
The illicit drug trade and other criminal markets.	4.17
Socioeconomic conditions.	4.08
Location (e.g., high-risk neighborhoods).	4.04
Lack of economic and employment prospects.	4.03
Desire of youth to belong to a group	4.02
Lack of school success.	3.99
Media portrayals of the gang lifestyle.	3.72
Lack of social, recreation and sports opportunities.	3.67
Challenges faced by new Canadian/racialized families in establishing themselves.	3.52
Urban sprawl from Toronto	3.48
Police gang suppression in Toronto and resulting "displacement effect" to Peel Region.	3.47
Racism	3.36

Discussion/Commentary:

As the data demonstrate, there is agreement that family, the illicit drug trade, socioeconomic conditions, location lack of economic/employment prospects and desire of youth to belong to a gang are primary drivers of the gang issue. Likewise, lack of school success has been identified as a driver, and to a lesser extent media portrayal of the gang lifestyle and lack of social, recreation and sports opportunities. The fact that scores are tightly clustered suggests that respondents have not differentiated clearly the primary drivers of gang issues (e.g., many respondents accord responsibility to many factors, not specific ones in particular). Slight to moderate agreement was expressed in regards to the challenges faced by new Canadians, urban sprawl from Toronto, the displacement effect from Toronto, with racism considerations representing the lowest level of agreement.

IMPLICATIONS/PROSPECTIVE CONSULTATION DISCUSSION ITEMS:
- *More time should be spent during the consultation to prioritize the key drivers, so that priorities can be established in terms of policy response.*

8. Preventing Gang Involvement	Score
Career or job training	4.40
Gang-exit programs for gang-involved or affiliated youth.	4.36
Long-term mentoring programs	4.34
Programs to create stronger bonds between children and parents	4.32
Life skills development programs	4.32
Group/one on one counseling for conduct disordered youth	4.29
Organized after-school sports, recreation and leisure activities	4.29
Gang awareness programs directed to youth	4.26
Programs to address early identified aggressive children	4.18
Alternative school programs	4.09
Supervised homework clubs	3.96
Tougher criminal justice sanctions for those convicted of a gang or gang-related crime	3.96
Enhanced English as a second language (ESL) training	3.44

Discussion/Commentary:

As the data demonstrate, there is agreement across the majority of items posed in the survey instrument, with the highest level of agreement being career or job training (4.40) to alternative school programs (4.09). Slight to moderate agreement expressed in regards to items including supervised homework clubs, tougher criminal justice sanctions and ESL training.

IMPLICATIONS/PROSPECTIVE CONSULTATION DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- *Again, scores are tightly clustered suggesting that more analysis needs to be done to prioritize prospective policy directions in respect to gang prevention.*
- *Triangulating the results from the Gang Driver question (#7) with this one above, we see only slight to moderate agreement in respect to items that pertain essentially to New Canadians (e.g., lack of ESL, difficulties in transitioning, provision of enhanced ESL training). This issue requires further examination, as anecdotal evidence suggests that the principal cohort of gang involved youth in the Peel Region and indeed the entire GTA are young, racialized youth.*

Question #9

What would you like community leaders and others to do about the youth gang situation in Peel?

Full commentary is found in the March 6 Discussion Paper. Content from this question of the survey was imported into both NVivo and Wordle for content analysis and to produce a tabular and visual summary of the most prevalent concepts noted. For the purposes of this final report, we have enclosed for illustrative purposes only the summary of NVivo key concepts as well as Wordle visual representations. Again, we refer the reader to the March 6, 2013 report for more detailed examination of qualitative commentary.

With respect to the question, "What would you like community leaders and others to do about the youth gang situation in Peel?". The key concepts that emerged from NVivo analysis included:

- Belief that more community programs are needed to address gang issue
- Respondents believe that we need to engage students in after-school activities.
- Respondents believe that many sectors of society must be engaged, including police, parents, the community, schools
- Education and awareness are judged as important in our response to gangs.
- More sports, social and employment programs need to be offered to enhance response to gang issues.

The following graphic is a visual representation of word frequency derived from www.wordle.net analysis.

IMPLICATIONS/PROSPECTIVE CONSULTATION DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- *What, specifically, are the types of programs that need to be created to address youth at-risk of gang involvement; what programs are required to address the needs of youth who are already gang-involved?*
- *What are the kinds of initiatives schools can undertake to support or address the needs of youth at-risk of gang involvement or already gang-involved?*
- *In what ways can police, parents and the broader community collaborate to address the issue of youth/street gangs?*
- *What are the kinds of education and awareness programs Peel Region can implement to ensure the community is better aware of gang issues?*

Question #10

In what ways, if at all, do you feel impacted by gang violence?

The key concepts that emerged from NVivo analysis included:

- Respondents feels less safe, especially at night when they are walking
- Respondents feel the impact of violence in their communities
- Respondents are witnessing more graffiti in their communities
- Respondents believe there is a more active drug trade in Peel
- Respondents believe that their children/youth see and experience violence at school, or believe that their safety has been diminished at school

The word frequency images below reinforce some of these notions highlighted above.

IMPLICATIONS/PROSPECTIVE CONSULTATION DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- *Are there strategies (education, awareness, policing, CPTED, etc.) that can be employed to enhance residents' feelings of safety outside their home, especially at night?*
- *What existing processes are in place to address the visible signs of gang activity, such as graffiti? Is this graffiti vandalism gang graffiti (rare) versus the ubiquitous "hip hop" graffiti such as tagging? Is there capacity available to improve the response to graffiti in the Peel Region?*
- *If gang and drug activity is present in schools as respondents believe, how can we best obtain the voice and opinion of youth in respect to the prevalence of this activity, their perceptions of this activity, the extent to which they feel unsafe as a result of this activity, etc?*
- *What are school boards/schools doing to address gang activity and the illicit drug trade within school settings?*
- *Do school boards employ any form of threat assessment protocol to judge the relative level of risk posed by gangs? In an emergency response plan in place to deal with prospective gang activity/crimes?*
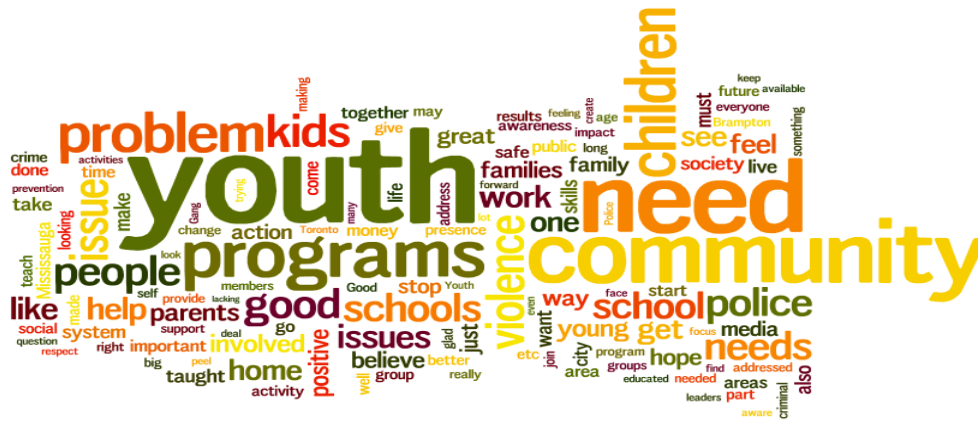
Question #11

Do you have any final thoughts or comments in respect to the issues raised in this survey?

The key concepts that emerged from NVivo analysis included:

- Respondents believe that to deal with the gang situation, more community programs are required for children and youth.
- Schools have an active role to play.
- Addressing the gang issue requires addressing family issues.

The word frequency images below reinforce some of these notions highlighted above.

IMPLICATIONS/PROSPECTIVE CONSULTATION DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- *What, specifically, are the types of programs that need to be created to address youth at-risk of gang involvement; what programs are required to address the needs of youth who are already gang-involved?*
- *What are the kinds of initiatives schools can undertake to support or address the needs of youth at-risk of gang involvement or already gang-involved?*
- *In what way can family needs be addressed to deal with youth that are at risk of gang involvement or already gang-involved?*
- *Is there a way in which the views/perspectives/needs of families or parents be obtained? Should SCM/BSC consider the formation of a diverse parent's council or advisory board to inform response?*

2.2   STAKEHOLDER SURVEY

There were a total of **116** respondents, with variable levels of response to the questions posed, as the following chart demonstrates:

Response Level by Question		
Question	**Total Respondents**	**Response %**
1. Please check the box that best describes your employer	110	94.8
2. Please check your gender.	116	100
3. Where do you live?	116	100
4. Please check your age range.	115	99.1
5. How would you describe your understanding of the youth gang situation in Peel?	116	100
6. Incidence and Impacts	97	83.6
7. Community readiness and response	97	83.6
8. Potential barriers	97	83.6
9. Drivers of the youth gang problem	97	83.6
10. Preventing gang involvement	97	83.6
11. Key factors for success	49	42.2
12. Final thoughts and comments	27	23.3
Discussion/Commentary: Taking into account questions 1 through 8, we achieved a median response of rate of 106 respondents, which is beyond our initial expectations (n = 75).		

With respect to the stakeholder survey, the same analytical approaches were used as per the community survey, with key findings summarized below. Full findings can be found in the March 6, 2013 Discussion Paper.

1. How long have you resided in the Peel Region?		
Answer Options	**Response Percent**	**Response Count**
Municipal government agency/department	27.3%	30
Social services agency	22.7%	25
Police Service	18.2%	20
Education	11.8%	13
Provincial government agency/department	6.4%	7
Community representative/leader	3.6%	4

Other Justice Service agency	2.7%	3
Health services	1.8%	2
Corporation/private sector/self-employed	1.8%	2
Advocacy group or association	1.8%	2
Federal government agency/department	0.9%	1
Elected official	0.9%	1
	answered question	**110**

Discussion/Implications:

As the data demonstrates, approximately 80% of the sample is composed of representatives of municipal government, social services, police and education, with the balance from a variety of sectors. While this cohort of respondents perhaps represents the majority of organizations that are exposed to the youth/street gang issue, a greater representation from other sectors of the community would have been helpful to inform response.

IMPLICATIONS/PROSPECTIVE CONSULTATION DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- *Additional efforts may be advisable to consult with these other sectors to ensure a balanced response.*

2. Please check your gender		
Answer Options	**Response Percent**	**Response Count**
Female	61.2%	71
Male	38.8%	45
	answered question	**116**

Discussion/Commentary:

As the data demonstrates, women predominate in the sample. Since the demographics of Peel are roughly equivalent in terms of gender distribution, this result confirms again that the sample is not representative of the entire Peel community.

IMPLICATIONS/PROSPECTIVE CONSULTATION DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- *Additional efforts must be expended to gather opinion from men, as they are under-represented in the sample.*

3. Where do you live?		
Answer Options	**Response Percent**	**Response Count**
Mississauga	34.5%	40
Brampton	23.3%	27
Caledon	11.2%	13
Other	31.0%	36
answered question		**116**

Discussion/Commentary:

Respondents are diverse in terms of their location and the data demonstrate representative distribution across the three principal Peel communities.

4. Please check your age range.		
Answer Options	**Response Percent**	**Response Count**
Under 19	0.0%	0
20 to 30	21.7%	25
31 to 40	32.2%	37
41 to 50	27.0%	31
51 to 60	16.5%	19
60+	2.6%	3
answered question		**115**

Discussion/Commentary:

As the data demonstrates, the age profile is diverse with approximately 60% of the sample representing the age cohort of 31 to 50. While we do not know to what extent respondents in this age cohort have families, we can reasonably assume that the majority of our respondents likely have children and indeed, may potentially be the most affected or concerned by the youth/street gang situation in Peel.

IMPLICATIONS/PROSPECTIVE CONSULTATION DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- *Youth voice has not been heard, suggesting additional efforts to gather opinion from youth in the community.*

5. How would you describe your understanding of the youth gang situation in Peel?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Excellent	5.2%	6
Very Good	21.6%	25
OK	46.6%	54
Not Very Good	22.4%	26
Poor	4.3%	5
I Don't Know	0.0%	0
answered question		116

Commentary:

As the data demonstrate, approximately 70% of the sample have reasonable to excellent knowledge of the gang situation in Peel, which enhances the probative value of our sample.

IMPLICATIONS/PROSPECTIVE CONSULTATION DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- As per community survey findings, for future surveying of stakeholders we should consider a "two stream" survey, wherein those indicating that they have "OK" to "Excellent" knowledge of the gang issue are presented with a full panel of questions that pre-suppose a certain level of knowledge, and where those with "Not Very Good" to "Poor" knowledge being directed to a different set of questions that attempt to probe items such as the possible concern about gang issues, the extent to which they wish to learn more about gang issues, what gang issues do they wish to learn more about, etc.

6. Incidents and Impacts	Score
Within the Peel Region, there is visible evidence of youth gang activity.	3.92
In the course of my work, I have dealt with young people involved with or affiliated with gangs.	3.92
I am personally concerned about the youth gang situation in Peel.	3.86
The youth gang situation in Peel is growing in size and severity.	3.86
Community safety has been diminished in the past 10 years because of youth gangs operating in and around Peel.	3.53
With respect to youth justice, youth gangs are the most pressing issue in Peel.	3.18
I have been victimized, directly or indirectly, by youth gang violence or youth criminal activity.	2.31

Commentary:

As the data demonstrate, there is agreement that there is visible evidence of gang activity in Peel and that many respondents both work with gang-involved youth and are concerned about the gang situation. Likewise, there is reasonable agreement that the youth gang situation in Peel is growing in size and severity, with only slight agreement that community

safety, in general, has been diminished as a result of gang activity. There is little agreement that respondents have been victimized directly or indirectly as a result of gang violence or youth criminal activity.

IMPLICATIONS/PROSPECTIVE CONSULTATION DISCUSSION ITEMS:
- *What do people consider to be "visible gang activity"? Are there any policy prescriptions that flow from this visible activity (e.g., if there is a prevalence of gang graffiti, the creation/expansion of a region-wide graffiti removal program)*
- *What is the profile (age/gender/race/criminal history/etc.) of the gang-involved youth respondents work with?*
- *What concerns respondents most about the youth gang situation?*
- *In what ways is the youth gang situation growing in size and severity? Are there specific patterns or trends in terms of this growth? Is there support for the idea of determining "priority communities" in Peel so that social investments can be prioritized towards communities of greater need?*
- *What are other pressing priorities in respect to youth justice in Peel?*

7. Community Readiness and Response	Score
To respond to youth gangs, we need a greater prevention response.	4.49
To respond to youth gangs, we need a greater reintegration (post-custody release support) response (e.g., housing, employment, coping skills, alternative school, etc.)	4.28
We can learn a lot about the youth gang situation by talking to gang affiliated youth.	4.19
Front line service providers in Peel require training on youth gang issues.	4.15
To respond to youth gangs, we need a greater diversion (e.g., refer you to programs rather than arrest and charge) and intervention response.	3.96
Myself and/or my organization has adequate knowledge of the risk and protective factors underlying gang affiliation.	3.38
Confidentiality concerns are a barrier to inter-agency collaboration and communication.	3.35
To respond to youth gangs, we need a greater police suppression (e.g., street checks, patrols) and enforcement response.	3.27
In Peel, there is sufficient inter-agency cooperation, goodwill and collaboration to create an effective coalition to address present and emerging youth gang issues.	3.09
There is sufficient political willingness in Peel to create an effective strategy to address youth gangs.	2.93

There is sufficient political willingness to address the root causes of gang formation in Peel.	2.67
Myself and/or my organization has adequate knowledge of international best practices in youth gang prevention.	2.63
In Peel, we do a good job educating youth about the dangers of youth gangs and gang violence.	2.51
There is sufficient money available in Peel to respond to youth gangs.	2.27
The social service sector and youth serving agencies in Peel have sufficient capacity (physical, financial and human resources) to meet the challenges posed by youth gangs.	2.20
As a community, we have adequate programs services to address youth gangs in Peel.	2.18
Schools and educators are well equipped and prepared to deal with youth gangs and youth gang members.	2.06
Our custody facilities are effective at reforming and rehabilitating youth involved with gang related or other crimes.	2.00
Parents/caregivers of Peel youth have a good level of awareness about youth gang issues.	1.85

Discussion/Commentary:

As the data demonstrate, there is strong agreement that to respond to youth gangs, prevention and reintegration should take priority. Strong agreement was also expressed in respect to learning from gang involved youth, as well as the need for front line agencies to receive additional training on youth gang issues. This is supported by the slight agreement expressed in respect to the extent to which front-line agencies have adequate knowledge of the risk and protective factors associated with gang involvement. Slight agreement was expressed in respect to the need for greater police suppression. A neutral position was expressed in respect to the extent of inter-agency cooperation, goodwill and collaboration to create an effective anti-gang coalition, as well as the political willingness to address the root causes of gang involvement. Disagreement was expressed again in respect to organization's knowledge level of best practices in youth gang prevention, as well as extent to which Peel educates youth about the dangers of gang involvement. The strongest disagreement was expressed in regards to the capacity of the social service sector in Peel to meet the challenges posed by youth gangs.

IMPLICATIONS/PROSPECTIVE CONSULTATION DISCUSSION ITEMS:
- *With respect to prevention, what kinds/types of programs do consultation delegates prefer or believe will be effective?*
- *With respect to reintegration, what kinds/types of programs do consultation delegates prefer or believe will be effective?*
- *How to we engage gang-involved youth so that we can learn from them?*

- *What are the subject's front line agencies would like to learn about in respect to youth/street gang awareness?*
- *What can be done to enhance the level of inter-agency collaboration on the gang issue? What are the key barriers to such collaboration and goodwill?*
- *How do we best engage with youth to educate them on the dangers of gang involvement? What forms of education will make the greatest impact on youth?*

8. Potential Barriers	Score
Lack of knowledge/understanding of the youth gang issue.	3.96
Lack of resources.	3.96
Existence of other, more important competing priorities.	3.78
Fear and uncertainty in regards to confronting the youth gang issue.	3.70
Belief that it is the police service's job, as well as other criminal justice system stakeholders, to deal with this challenge.	3.53
A general lack of willingness to act or absence of community leadership.	3.32
Lack of cooperation between and amongst front-line agencies.	3.30

Discussion/Commentary:

As the data demonstrate, respondents agree that lack of knowledge of the youth gang issue as well as lack of resources are the two leading barriers in regards to responding to the youth gang issue. Similarly, there is agreement that there are other competing priorities that act as barriers to responding to youth gangs, with fear and uncertainty also representing barriers to response. Only slight agreement was expressed in respect to a lack of willingness amongst community leaders to act, as well as lack of cooperation between and amongst front-line agencies.

IMPLICATIONS/PROSPECTIVE CONSULTATION DISCUSSION ITEMS:
- In what format should training and education resources be delivered for those working at the front lines? (paper, web, video, stand-up training, etc.)?
- What resources do delegates believe are required to respond adequately to the gang issue?
- What are the other, competing priorities? Should these be addressed before or concurrently with the gang issue?
- In question 7, there was slight agreement that there was sufficient inter-agency collaboration and goodwill to address the gang situation (3.09), yet in question 8, there is slightly higher agreement (3.30) that there is a lack of cooperation between and amongst front-line agencies. What is therefore the consensus position, if any, on the level of cooperation/collaboration between front line agencies?

9. Drivers of the Youth Gang Problem	Score
Desire of youth to belong to a group	4.24
Lack of family connection or family breakdown.	4.22
The illicit drug trade and other criminal markets.	4.11
Location (e.g., high-risk neighborhoods).	4.08
Socioeconomic conditions.	4.05
Lack of school success.	4.03
Lack of economic and employment prospects.	4.00
Media portrayals of the gang lifestyle.	3.86
Police gang suppression in Toronto and resulting "displacement effect" to Peel Region.	3.66
Challenges faced by new Canadian/racialized families in establishing themselves.	3.65
Urban sprawl from Toronto	3.61
Lack of social, recreation and sports opportunities.	3.54
Racism	3.13

Discussion/Commentary:

As the data demonstrate, respondents allocated responsibility to the youth gang issues to a number of issues including desire of youth t belong to a group, family breakdown, drug trade/other illicit criminal markets, local, socioeconomic conditions, etc. Slight agreement was expressed in respect to a possible displacement effect from Toronto to Peel, as well as challenges faced by new Canadians when attempting to establish themselves in Canada.

IMPLICATIONS/PROSPECTIVE CONSULTATION DISCUSSION ITEMS:
- *Greater discussion required on principal drivers of the youth gang problem in Peel. Are there any regional variations in respect to these drivers?*
- *Given this array of drivers, what are possible policy prescriptions to address them?*

10. Preventing Gang Involvement	Score
Long-term mentoring programs	4.41
Life skills development programs	4.38
Gang-exit programs for gang-involved or affiliated youth.	4.38
Career or job training	4.36
Group/one on one counseling for conduct disordered youth	4.30
Programs to create stronger bonds between children and parents	4.28
Organized after-school sports, recreation and leisure activities	4.24
Programs to address early identified aggressive children	4.20
Gang-awareness program directed to youth	4.19
Alternative school programs	4.15
Supervised homework clubs	3.87
Tougher criminal justice sanctions for those convicted of a gang or gang related crime	3.75
Enhanced English as a second language (ESL) training	3.24

Discussion/Commentary:

As the data demonstrate, findings are tightly clustered in terms of their level of agreement (agree to strongly agree) indicating that respondents believe that multiple strategies are required to prevent gang involvement. Additional analysis and consultation is necessary, however, to prioritize these prospective strategies, given that resources for our response may be constrained. Moderate agreement was also expressed in respect to tougher sentences for youth convicted of gang related crimes, with ESL programs demonstrating only slight agreement within the respondent sample.

Question #11

Please describe your thoughts in respect to the key factors for success underlying an effective strategy on youth gangs for Peel.

The key concepts that emerged from NVivo analysis included:

- Respondents (stakeholders) believe that to deal with the gang situation, more community programs are required for children and youth, including employment, life skills, etc.
- Schools and the education system have an important role to play.
- Support and services are required for parents and families
- Prevention and intervention should be keys to dealing with the gang issue

The word frequency images below reinforce some of these notions highlighted above.

For this question, we conducted further cluster analysis to identify any additional key themes in the response that were not uncovered through visual representation. The following chart highlights the most frequent responses:

Question #12

Do you have any final thoughts or comments in respect to the issues raised in this survey?

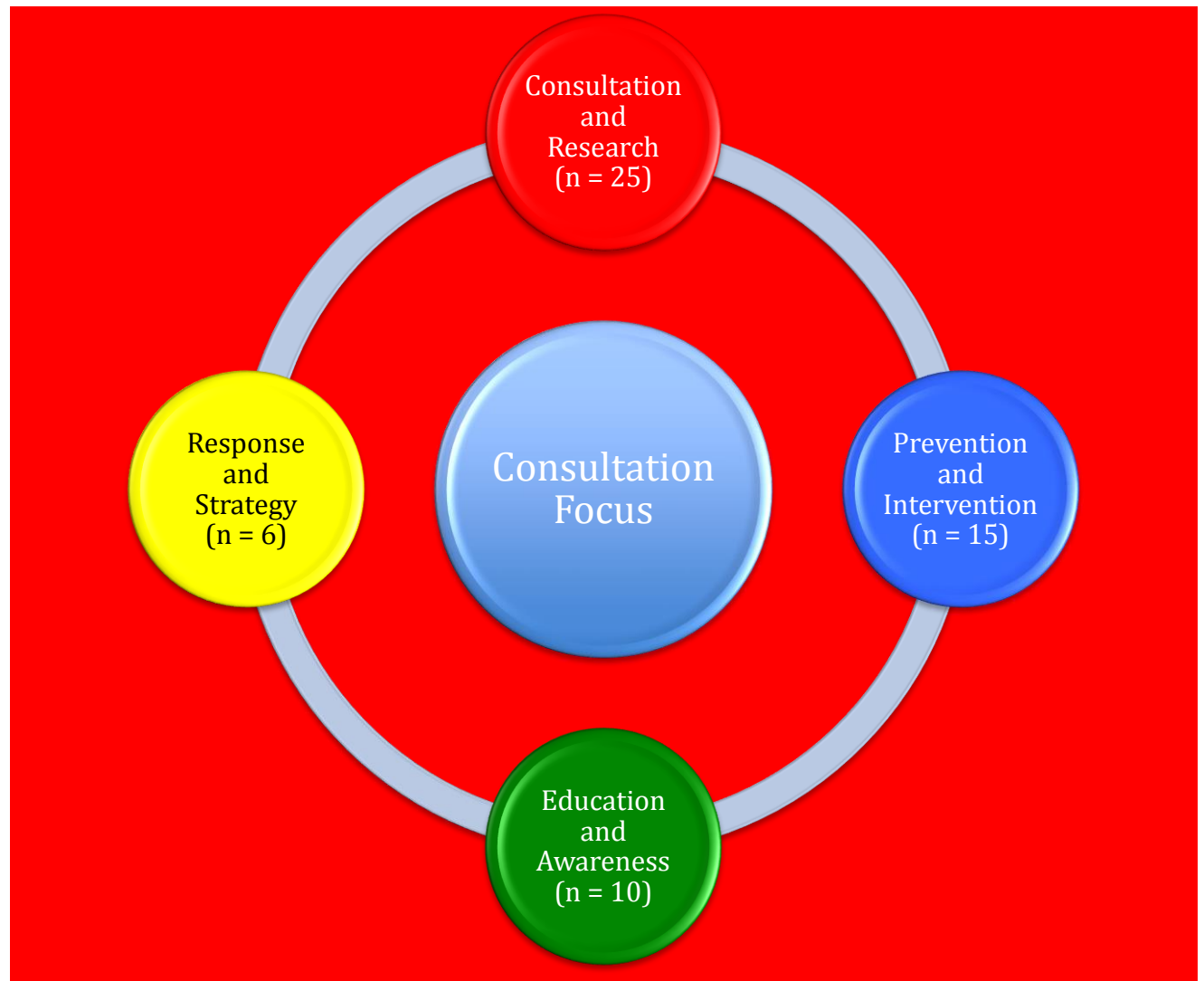The key concepts that emerged from NVivo analysis included:

- Respondents believe more programs and activities need to be provided to youth.
- Prevention should be a key feature of the Peel response.
- Awareness and education should be a part of the Peel gang strategy.

The word frequency images below reinforce some of these notions highlighted above.

2.3   CONSULTATION DISCUSSION ITEMS

When analyzing data in respect to the community and stakeholder survey, a variety of implications or prospective consultation items were identified for further consideration during the consultation. Many times, the key implications arose from several questions, indicating that the implication represented a popularly held belief or perspective. These implications were analysed and clustered into key themes, which are summarized and colour-coded on the following page:

SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS	FREQUENCY	SUMMARY OF THEME
Need to gather opinion from men	2	Consultation and Research
Focus on prevention and reintegration	3	Prevention and Intervention
Careful interpretation of survey findings as may not be fully representative of community	1	Consultation and Research
Focus on education and awareness	1	Education and Awareness
Two streams of future surveying	2	Consultation and Research
Strong response required to deal with community concerns	1	Response and Strategy
Police need to better articulate gang response	1	Education and Awareness
Community inventory of existing programs, services, capacity	1	Consultation and Research
Awareness materials for schools	1	Education and Awareness
Awareness materials for parents	2	Education and Awareness
Prioritize key drivers	2	Consultation and Research
Focus on prevention v. suppression	1	Prevention and Intervention
Is race a factor in response?	2	Consultation and Research
What programs and services are required for youth at risk/gang-involved youth?	6	Prevention and Intervention
What can schools do/what are schools doing?	4	Prevention and Intervention
How can collaboration be engineered?	3	Response and Strategy
Awareness materials for Peel Region (government/front line agencies)	2	Education and Awareness
How improve perception of public safety/how improve public safety?	1	Education and Awareness
Dealing with visible signs of gang activity/are these signs truly indicative of gang activity?	2	Consultation and Research
Need to obtain voice of youth, including gang-involved	5	Consultation and Research
How support needs of parents/what are needs of parents/families?	3	Consultation and Research
What is profile of gang-involved youth?	1	Consultation and Research
What concerns community most about gangs?	1	Consultation and Research
How is gang activity changing/evolving?	2	Consultation and Research
What are the other pressing criminal justice issues?	1	Consultation and Research
What reintegration programs and services are required?	1	Prevention and Intervention
What should be the content of awareness materials?	2	Education and Awareness
Is there support for evidence-based approaches?	2	Consultation and Research
Availability of funding	1	Response and Strategy
Extent of political willingness to act	1	Response and Strategy

Our cluster analysis suggested the following four key themes for in-depth discussion at the March 27/28, 2013 consultation.

Consultation and Research (n = 25)

Response and Strategy (n = 6)

Consultation Focus

Prevention and Intervention (n = 15)

Education and Awareness (n = 10)

THEME	CORE CONSIDERATION(S)
A: Consultation and Research	**Summary**: Additional research and consultation is required to ensure Peel Region Gang Strategy is representative of a diversity of opinion and reflects the needs and realities of the communities. **Action**: *Delegates should consider the manner in which we can continue to consult with the community and obtain a true representative sample of opinion, including youth. What strategies should be employed? How will we engage youth in this process, including youth who may be gang or criminally involved? How will we conduct an inventory of existing capacity? How do we determine the profile of gang involved youth as well as extent of gang issue in Peel Region?*
B: Prevention and Intervention	**Summary:** Research to date has demonstrated a great emphasis on crime prevention, reintegration and intervention approaches, rather than enhanced police suppression or "get tough" approaches to dealing with criminally and gang-involved youth. **Action**: *Delegates should consider or research the kinds of programs and services they believe will be effective in gang prevention and intervention, including community-based/school-based and police-led approaches. How committed are delegates to evidence-based approaches, and the use of evaluation to determine program efficacy? What reintegration or rehabilitation programs should be created or offered to those who are gang-involved?*
C: Education and Awareness	**Summary:** There is broad consensus that high-quality education and awareness resources must be developed, including communications materials that will inform community of Peel Region Gang Strategy. **Action**: *Delegates should consider the form or manner in which education and awareness should be delivered to youth, parents, educators, etc. What should the content be in these materials? Who should deliver them? What should be the mix of delivery channels (school v. police v. government v. youth led, etc.)? What should be the components of an overall communications strategy for Peel Region in respect to*

	its ongoing efforts to develop and implement a region-wide Gang Strategy?
D: Response and Strategy	**Summary:** Community stakeholders must realistically assess extent of cooperation and collaboration and re-engineer systems to ensure optimal response, all in a manner that respects current constraints (budget, political willingness, existing capacity, etc.)
	Action: *Delegates should consider the ways in which collaborations can be developed or engineered to ensure success? Who should lead this effort? What should be the governance model? What expectations should be set within Peel Region in terms of next steps? What are the practical constraints that will limit progress on this file? What should be the next steps after this consultation?*

SECTION 3

CONSULTATION FINDINGS

As noted earlier, to establish the foundation for the development of a youth gang strategy for Peel, we employed a two-phased process of first a community/stakeholder survey, which then informed our discussion at a two-day facilitated consultation held on March 27/28, 2013 in Mississauga.

The facilitation was organized by Safe City Mississauga and featured the participation of approximately 140 people representing a wide array of community partners and stakeholders including but not limited to police, educators, social workers, youth serving workers, agency management staff, community activists, corrections workers, community justice workers and more. The consultation was designed both to share information and gather it, and included a mix of guest speakers, facilitated breakout sessions wherein key themes identified above (e.g., see pages 28 and 29) were discussed with groups of approximately 30 to 40 people each and, at the end of the two day session, electronic polling of key themes and possible action items.

This report is not intended to comment on the content of guest speakers' presentations but rather, focus on information gathered during the break out facilitations as well as the electronic polling. There is only one exception to this, which relates to the feedback that arose from the Peel Regional Police presentation on the morning of the 27th. Section 3.1 presents a summary of questions posed by the delegation to the Peel Regional Police; Section 3.2 presents a summary of discussions arising from each of the four key discussion items and, Section 3.3 presents findings from the electronic polling.

3.1   PEEL REGIONAL POLICE PRESENTATIONS AND QUESTIONS

On day one of our gathering, the head of the Peel Regional Police Service (PRPS) gang unit, Inspector Norman English, was asked to provide an overview of the gang situation in Peel. Inspector English, along with Constables Adam Lobo and Jason Lennon, presented a 30-minute overview of key Peel Regional gang issues along with various supporting information including their agency's perspective on key risk factors, profile of gang involved youth and signs of gang involvement.

After their presentation, Inspector English opened the floor to questions from the delegation. Indeed, the discussion and questions were very lively and in some respects, outside of the context of the purpose of the gathering. For example, a rather contentious question was posed in respect to the PRPS's policy on street checks, known as "carding" in the vernacular. The

energy level in the room rose considerably, so much so, that to maintain decorum and consistency with the agenda, Michael Chettleburgh terminated the question period in favor of a process whereby he would gather questions from the delegation which then would be forwarded to Chief Jennifer Evans for consideration. No expectation was set by the facilitator in respect to the PRPS's willingness or ability to answer these questions, the timeframe in which these questions would be addressed, nor the format in which responses could be delivered back to community stakeholders in attendance at the gathering.

A summary of the questions follows and we note that no response, to date, has been received from the PRPS:

1. If a victim of a gang crime that occurred in Peel wishes to stay in Peel, how safe do you think that person is in terms of on-going Peel Regional Police (PRP) protection, monitoring of offenders, etc.?
2. To what extent have PRP officers received training in: race relations; diversity; anti-oppression/anti-racism concepts, etc.?
3. How does PRP prioritize its response to gang crimes as well as gang suppression? By incident? By community?
4. For the purposes of enforcement and gang suppression, has PRP defined "priority" communities? How have these been defined (e.g., crime statistics, social indicators, etc.)? If so, what are these priority communities? How do these communities correlate with existing social housing communities in Peel?
5. What is the PRP definition of gangs? What is the PRP definition of gang member?
6. What is PRP's perspective on female gangs or female gang members? What are we dealing with in terms of numbers, nature of criminal activities or gang affiliation, etc.?
7. What are the criteria used by the PRP to enter a youth on a gang intelligence database (computer based or paper)? What are the criteria for removing a youth from a gang intelligence database?
8. To what extent is Peel affected by movement of Canadian and transnational organized crime groups in and out of region?
9. For offenders convicted previously of a drug-related charge (possession, use, etc.) and may suffer drug addictions, how does the PRP typically handle repeat offences when an offender "falls of the wagon"? Is PRP preference to charge, or find a community-based treatment solution?
10. To what extent have officers, including school liaison personnel, been trained in restorative justice processes? Is the PRP committed to referring non-violent cases to community-based RJ processes, including those related to youth/the schools? Are there protocols in place for these referrals?
11. To what extent do front-line officers in Peel live in the communities they serve?
12. Can PRP describe the breakdown of gang related crime in Peel relative to racialized v. non-racialized offenders? (e.g., what is percentage of crimes/gang activity by ethno cultural grouping?)

13. What are PRP's policies in respect to complaints against the police? How transparent is the process in terms of the outcome of these investigations?
14. To what extent has PRP invested in training and education to help officers screen for mental health considerations? Are they capable of identifying possible mental health conditions in offenders?
15. What are the PRP's processes for deploying Community Liaison Officers? How do you decide who/when to re-deploy an officer? In what ways can PRP increase long-term issues of continuity in CLO deployment (e.g., the community felt that there was a lack of continuity, that they would prefer longer term deployments that leveraged relationships that were built).
16. Please describe the manner in which PRP tracks/monitors/acts on race based crime statistics.
17. With respect to issue of "carding" (street checks), what is the PRP policy In this regard? Will PRP release statistics in respect to ethno cultural breakdown of their street checks?
18. What is the PRP doing to address the community's distrust of the PRP, especially within marginalized and racialized communities?
19. Overall, what is the PRP's deployment in respect to gang issues, including headcount of gang unit, headcount of specialty suppression units, etc.?

3.2 FACILITATED DISCUSSIONS

On Day Two of our gathering, the majority of time was spent in facilitated discussions. Specifically, delegates were randomly assigned a number from one to four, representing the group they were asked to join for the purposes of the facilitation. As per the previous community/stakeholder surveys, a total of four key themes ("Tables") were identified for exploration which included, for each, a number of key questions. Delegates were asked to stay in their group, but were cycled through each of the four theme areas, where a facilitator would pose each question within that theme, gather opinion and attempt to identity areas of consensus. Each of the four sessions lasted approximately 75 to 90 minutes, with the last 20 minutes of each session reserved for each of the group facilitators (e.g., 5 minutes each) to share the key findings from each group with the entire delegation. In this way, all delegates had the opportunity to share their perspectives on each of the four themes and facilitators likewise had the opportunity to reveal key findings from each group.

To assist the facilitators, a summary of key themes and questions within each was prepared, shown in their entirety below along with key commentary from delegates.

Table A: Consultation and Research

Summary:

Additional research and consultation is required to ensure Peel Region Gang Strategy is representative of a diversity of opinion and reflects the needs and realities of the communities.

Core Questions:

1. **Do you believe we need to conduct additional research, and consult further, in support of the creation of an integrated, effective youth/street gang strategy for Peel Region?**

    All four groups answered in the affirmative to this question, noting:
    - More research with youth as well as parents of youth
    - While new research important, let's look at existing data and research findings as well, such as Roots of Youth Violence Report by Dr. Alvin Curling
    - Additional research required in Peel to understand the nature, extent and characteristics of youth gang involvement, youth crime, etc.
    - Additional research required to understand needs of racialized communities
    - Quantitative research important, but more needs to be done on qualitative research

2. **If consensus to the above, then what is the <u>kind</u> of research or consultation needed?**

    All four groups offered a variety of possible research priorities, as follows:
    - What are community needs?
    - Best practices in gang intervention and prevention
    - More consultation with educators and faith group leaders
    - Literature review, including analysis of "grey" literature (unpublished reports)
    - What's working and lessons learned from ineffective programs
    - Key resiliency factors practices by well-functioning youth and youth leaders
    - How gangs are changing in GTA and Peel Region
    - More research based on experiences of gang-involved youth
    - Data from hospitals to determine type of injuries, possible underlying crimes, etc.
    - More current numbers in respect to size and scope of the problem in Peel
    - More research based on youth "at cusp" of gang involvement – what motivated them to actually join a gang?
    - More information on connection between youth/street gangs and organized crime
    - Better understanding of today's youth culture
    - More research needed on systemic discrimination

3. **Related to the above, should we invest the resources required to obtain a clear picture of the "face" of gangs in Peel (age, gender, ethnicity, nature of activities, etc.), or should we rely on Police Service's guidance in this respect?**

    All four groups answered that a police picture is not sufficient, with comments including:
    - More research within high risk communities, especially social housing complexes.
    - Need to understand the gang situation also from perspective of grassroots organizations, as police may not have an accurate picture from inside the highest risk communities
    - Research gang situation from perspective of late elementary and high school teachers.
    - More data is needed, but need to overcome barriers and policies that prohibit the sharing of information.
    - Qualitative research must support police and other forms of data in respect to size and characteristics of Peel gangs

4. **If additional research or consultation is required, what is the priority in terms of stakeholder groups?**

    There was a variety of opinion offered, but no consensus emerged:
    - Local businesses - e.g., barber shops, convenience stores
    - Ministry of Children and Youth Services, Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services
    - Mall security
    - Ontario Works
    - People who have been involved in gangs
    - Hospital staff
    - Local social workers

5. **How (in what manner) should we reach and engage these groups?**

    Delegates offered the following commentary:
    - Via a "community hub" approach with multiple stakeholders at table, who are tasked with developing relationships and stimulating action in respect to gangs.
    - Create in person and web-based forums to create dialogue
    - Must build relationships first with the community so that they see a benefit in sharing information and collaborating in regards to prevention and intervention
    - More public awareness must be generated to help articulate youth gangs as a problem that requires a community response.

- Provide incentives to community organizations to collaborate and share information
- Use social media – Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, etc.
- Engage youth at a social level through outreach workers, other youth serving agencies
- Need to train people specifically in the art of community consultation and information gathering, especially other youth, who can reach youth better than adults
- Place-based research – go to where youth/agencies are, instead of expecting them to come to us.

6. **Who should take the lead in coordinating this research and consultation (by "lead" this could include identifying resources to finance this research, establishing terms of reference for this research, conducting this research?**

Delegates offered the following commentary:
- A committee of community members and leaders, funded by government
- Safe City Mississauga
- Local education institutions (college, university)
- Community task force with broad representation from all stakeholders
- Should not be one leader, all stakeholders must be at the table
- Leaders from the cultural communities
- Police School Liaison officers

7. **How should we communicate the results of this research to stakeholders, to the community, etc.?**

Delegates offered the following commentary:
- Monthly reports and newsletters
- Web
- Central clearinghouse of information
- Via social services agencies
- Safe City Mississauga

Table B: Prevention and Intervention

Summary:

Research to date has demonstrated a great emphasis on crime prevention, intervention and reintegration, rather than enhanced police suppression or "get tough" approaches to dealing with gang-involved youth.

Core Questions:

1. **Research done to date suggests strong agreement that more prevention, intervention and reintegration programs must be offered to youth, rather than more police suppression. Do delegates agree that there is an absence of programs and services for youth in the community? Is there a material gap between our existing inventory and required inventory?**

   Delegates agreed unanimously agreed that there is an absence of supportive programs and services in the community for young people. Specific commentary included:
   - Absence of culturally relevant programs and services
   - Costs to access some programs, even if only small amounts, are difficult for economically challenges families and youth
   - Quantity may be there, but quality of programming often lacking

2. **Related to above, if consensus position is that more programs and services should be created/offered, what <u>specifically</u> are the kinds of programs and services that should take priority in our response?**

   Recommendations included:
   - More cultural programs; programs that connect youth to their traditional culture
   - Sports and recreation programming
   - Reality programming, with former gang involved youth like Dwight Daley
   - Education support programs – homework clubs, tutoring programs, alternative schooling programs for youth whom do not do well in traditional classroom settings
   - Rehabilitation and reintegration programs for youth who have been in conflict with the law
   - Mental health support programs
   - Language training
   - Employment preparation programs
   - Mentorship programs, especially important for youth from single parents
   - Entrepreneurship programs, microcredit initiatives

- Family-based counselling/cognitive behavioral therapy programs like multisystemic therapy, functional family therapy, SNAP program, etc.
- Youth led programs that stimulate leadership development
- ESL
- Case management programs that ensure higher risk youth receive timely, relevant and place based program and services
- Gang exiting programs
- Programs that provide incentive to youth for their participation in the form of rewards, school credits, etc.

3. **Within Peel, who are the key organizations and entities that should take the lead in creating and managing such programs and services?**

Suggestions included:
- Boys and Girls Clubs
- A community based coalition
- Peel Children and Youth Initiative
- Doesn't matter, other than a front line youth serving agency with experience, commitment and sufficient funding
- Schools can take the lead in terms of education support program; teachers should be expected to assist with after schools programs

4. **How do we believe we can resource (fund) the creation, implementation and management of these programs? Who should be responsible? Who should take the lead in mobilizing the funding necessary to finance and administer these programs?**

Suggestions included:
- United Way
- Local/regional government
- Pursue federal funding, but likely not sustainable in the long term (e.g., NCPC, Justice Canada)
- Ontario government, e.g., MCYS
- If stimulate the formation of a community coalition, the coalition or a sub-committee that deals with funding should take the lead and mobilize government, local agencies and corporations to invest in crime prevention through social development

5. **To what extent in Peel should we focus on and employ so-called "evidence-based" approaches? Should we focus on what we know works, or should we use this opportunity to be creative and discover "new knowledge". Related to this, what is the extent of commitment to program evaluation (process, impact and cost effectiveness), to guide future decision making on program/service provision?**

Commentary included:

- Evidence based is preferred, with a commitment to evaluation to determine what works and what doesn't
- Evidence based is important, but must take into account local context and cultural considerations which may or may not be addressed in a "model" program developed elsewhere
- Evidence based is good, but we need to be creative to deal with a unique Peel Region problem.

Table C: Education and Awareness

Summary:

There is broad consensus that high-quality education and awareness resources must be developed, including communications materials that will inform community of Peel Region Gang Strategy.

Core Questions:

1. **What should be our overarching communications objectives in terms of education and awareness materials? What is it that we seek to achieve through the development of these materials?**

   Delegates offered the following commentary:
   - Specialized messaging to reach youth who are at risk of gang involvement or who wish to exit the gang lifestyle
   - Messaging that is relevant for the grass roots
   - Placed based communication materials and strategies
   - Resources should first be directed and relevant for stakeholders, so that they in turn, can share information with youth in a place-based fashion
   - Provide realistic perspectives on gang involvement, not just try to scare youth into compliance with our wishes

2. **What kind of education and awareness materials and resources do we need to be developed and disseminated to support our strategy? <u>Be specific</u> in terms of the type of materials, its intended audience(s) and the priority of its roll-out.**

   Delegates offered the following commentary:
   - Need a centralized resource centre for materials

- Materials that can be customized to meet different contexts – gender, age, culture, etc.
- Information required for front-line personnel tasked with the job of intervening in the lives of at-risk youth
- Web and paper-based materials
- Multi-media materials that engage the audience, whether it is youth or front-line service providers
- Information also required for victims of gang or gang related crimes
- Information targeted to parents to help them prevent gang involvement within their family
- Training resources are required to help community stakeholders collaborate, perhaps training in how to hold consultations and "community dialogues".
- Speakers Corner, like CITY TV idea where people can share their thoughts in respect to the gang situation, as this will be helpful in helping the entire community understand the diverse issues surrounding gangs
- Whatever materials are developed, they should be asset based
- Educators should receive mandatory training in understanding and responding to gang-involved youth
- Reality-based programs for youth, including training developed or delivered by people who have been previously involved in youth gangs
- More training for police so that they become more culturally sensitive
- Video resources to help youth make good decisions, resist peer pressure, say no, etc.

3. **Who should take the lead in respect to the development of these materials? How do we ensure that these education and awareness materials are relevant and effective in influencing action?**

Delegates offered the following suggestions:
- Reputable crime prevention organization such as Safe City Mississauga or Brampton Safe City
- Should be part and parcel of the mandate of a proposed community-based coalition; e.g., a specific working committee that deals with education and awareness only
- Development efforts should be led by community committee, however, youth must be engaged in all facets of development to ensure that materials are relevant; use focus groups and other qualitative evaluation to ensure materials achieve their intended purpose
- Not the police, as this will not be considered a credible or unbiased source of information on gangs

Table D: Response, Policy and Strategy

Summary:
Community stakeholders must realistically assess extent of cooperation and collaboration and re-engineer systems to ensure optimal response in a manner that respects current constraints (budget, political willingness, existing capacity, etc.)

Core Questions:

1. **With respect to our future response, is there sufficient goodwill and commitment to collaboration amongst community stakeholders to engage in the creation, implementation, management and evaluation of a comprehensive gang strategy?**

   All four groups answered in the affirmative to this question, noting:
   - Yes, there is sufficient goodwill in which to build and implement a community solution to gang issues
   - Most stakeholders are already here so building on momentum should not be problematic
   - Goodwill exists but there may be some trust issues left to deal with in terms of collaboration, information sharing

2. **With respect future collaboration, what are they key barriers that we need to address at the outset?**

   Delegates noted the following as barriers:
   - Lack of trust
   - Lack of time
   - Funding
   - Differential philosophies and approaches in respect to dealing with gang issues
   - Information sharing protocols
   - Policies and preferences in respect to approaches, e.g., community based versus evidence based approaches
   - Fear and intimidation and people's true desires to work with or get to know gangs/gang members
   - Legal and privacy issues
   - Language, especially when dealing with ethno cultural communities
   - Institutional self-interest – collaboration maybe perceived as weakening an agency's ability to secure funds in a specific area
   - Power struggles in terms of who takes lead to craft and implement a strategy
   - Lack of common vocabulary
   - Lack of good data in respect to what we are dealing with
   - Define "collaboration"?

- Gang problem is ever changing, so hard to keep up
- Commitment might be lacking from agencies to dedicate staff time to a collaborative approach
- Lack of central source of information on Peel gangs
- Lack of change agents who are reflective of the community
- Lack of performance monitoring for stakeholder groups – how do we know if we are making progress or achieving goals?
- Too many silos! We keep talking about this, but nothing seems to change in terms of engineering better collaboration
- Lack of accurate portrayal of problem
- We have not created a "safe space" for youth to share their issues and concerns in respect to this and related issues
- Lack of trust in sharing information
- Cultural sensitivities and not addressing the "elephant in the room" – that this is an issue the largely affects the African Canadian community.

3. **From a policy perspective, what are the policies and procedures that we need to develop and communicate to ensure a cohesive response to gangs?**

   Delegates offered the following ideas:
   - Gun amnesty program
   - Alternative (restorative) sentencing
   - Improved programs and policies in respect to reintegration
   - Policies and programs to empower youth to build longer relationships with community
   - Policymakers should have social work background or training
   - More consistency in School Resource Officer/School Liaison officer deployment – let officers stay at same school for 3 to 4 years to build relationships and trust
   - More restorative justice approaches
   - Re-assess urban planning processes to address "ghettoization" of communities, especially social housing
   - More streamlined and consistent policies regarding disclosure of sensitive information
   - Communication policies and resources for youth and children
   - Risk assessment tools, training and policies for schools, youth centres, other public places

4. **With respect to the development of a strategy going forward, what do you believe is the optimum governance model?**

   Delegates offered the following ideas:

- Coalition model composed of people most affected by issue including youth, educators, police, social workers, social service agencies, etc.
- John Howard Society
- Community task force, including youth, all stakeholders
- Sub-committees formed as part of a coalition model to address key issues such as prevention, restorative justice, communications, youth liaison, funding, etc.
- Community coalition, but guided by a logic model, terms or reference, goals and objectives, etc.
- Peel Children and Youth Initiative
- Community coalition that is balanced in its orientation including research, policy, communication, evaluation, sustainability, etc.
- Too early to discuss governance and we still need to consult and evaluate extent/scope of problem

5. **Please obtain a sense from delegates their preferences in respect to next steps. Where should we go from here?**

Delegates offered the following ideas:
- Identify who would want to be on such a coalition, as well as determine whether agencies participating could put in some operating funds to sustain work of coalition.
- More consultation first
- More research first, especially youth, ethnocultural groups, etc.

3.3 ELECTRONIC POLLING

At the conclusion of Day Two, the Facilitator conducted an electronic polling session, wherein a selection of questions were posed to the delegation that reflected the common themes discussed over the two days.

Whereas the facilitated sessions provided each of 4 groups the opportunity to share their perspectives, the polling was designed to gather, in aggregate, the opinion of the entre delegation and test the extent to which their was consensus on key issues.

Delegates were provided with a handheld Turning Technologies polling device and were asked to indicate their degree of acceptance to 41 questions that were posed. After each question, the facilitator reviewed findings with the delegation then moved onto the next question. Found below are the questions and the results, with interpretations and commentary included where required.

We should note that whereas participation on Day One exceeded 130 delegates, about 30% of

the delegation left prior to the commencement of polling at the end of the second day.

1. **Additional research and consultation should be our first priority.**

CHOICE	%	COUNT
Strongly Agree	27.16	22
Agree	33.33	27
Neutral	14.81	12
Disagree	17.28	14
Strongly Disagree	7.41	6
Totals	**100%**	**81**

Majority of delegation (60%+) agreed (strong agreement or agreement) that research and consultation should be the first priority of the group in respect to moving the gang strategy agenda forward.

2. **Program governance should be our first priority.**

CHOICE	%	COUNT
Strongly Agree	18.9%	17
Agree	22.2%	20
Neutral	26.7%	24
Disagree	21.1%	19
Strongly Disagree	11.1%	10
Totals	**100.0%**	**90**

Relative to research and consultation, program governance seen as a lesser priority with approximately 41% agreeing/strongly agreeing that it should be the first priority.

3. **Development of prevention and intervention resources should be our first priority**

CHOICE	%	COUNT
Strongly Agree	46.2%	42
Agree	30.8%	28
Neutral	17.6%	16

Choice	%	Count
Disagree	2.2%	2
Strongly Disagree	3.3%	3
Totals	**100.0%**	**91**

77% of delegation agreed or strongly agreed that the development of prevention and intervention resources (such as programs and services) should the region's first priority.

4. **Development of education and awareness resources should be our first priority.**

Choice	%	Count
Strongly Agree	26.9%	25
Agree	32.3%	30
Neutral	21.5%	20
Disagree	12.9%	12
Strongly Disagree	6.5%	6
Totals	**100.0%**	**93**

Just under 60% of delegation agreed or strongly agreed that the development of education and awareness materials should the region's first priority.

5. **I would like the opportunity to review and comment on draft report of proceedings.**

Choice	%	Count
Strongly Agree	48.4%	45
Agree	20.4%	19
Neutral	20.4%	19
Disagree	3.2%	3
Strongly Disagree	7.5%	7
Totals	**100.0%**	**93**

Approximately 69% of delegation agreed or strongly agreed that they wish to offer commentary on the draft report of proceedings, indicative of a strong level of community engagement in this consultation process.

6. **Our primary funder should be:**

CHOICE	%	COUNT
Federal level	7.4%	7
Provincial level	13.8%	13
Municipal level	10.6%	10
Stakeholders in Coalition	0.0%	0
Foundations/Corporations	2.1%	2
All of the above	66.0%	62
Totals	**100.0%**	**94**

Two thirds of the delegation proposed that the funding stream for a coalition gang prevention effort should be all the possible funders noted in the question, with provincial funding noted as the leading individual source of financing.

7. **We must focus on identifying the needs, challenges and perspectives of youth.**

CHOICE	%	COUNT
Strongly Agree	79.8%	75
Agree	10.6%	10
Neutral	4.3%	4
Disagree	3.2%	3
Strongly Disagree	2.1%	2
Totals	**100.0%**	**94**

Over 90% of delegation agreed or strongly agreed that more needs to be done to identify the needs, challenges and perspectives of youth. There was broad consensus that this consultation was a starting point only in the formulation of a Peel Region gang strategy, and that more needed to be done to identify the perspective of youth who, of course, are most affected by gangs and gang-related issues.

8. **We must focus on identifying the needs, challenges and perspectives of racial and minority communities.**

CHOICE	%	COUNT
Strongly Agree	50.5%	47

Agree	30.1%	28
Neutral	9.7%	9
Disagree	4.3%	4
Strongly Disagree	5.4%	5
Totals	**100.0%**	**93**

Approximately 80% of delegation agreed or strongly agreed that more needs to be done to identify the needs, challenges and perspectives of racial and minority communities. As a general proposition, consultation discussions reflected belief that the gang issue disproportionately affects racialized/marginalized youth and that prior to the consultation, not enough was done to reach out to grass roots community organizations who service these youth to obtain their opinion on the gang issue. To be sure, ensuring a fulsome assessment of the gang issue is essential to secure broad based community support for a region-wide gang strategy.

9. **We must focus on identifying current capacity before planning response.**

CHOICE	%	COUNT
Strongly Agree	24.7%	24
Agree	55.7%	54
Neutral	9.3%	9
Disagree	5.2%	5
Strongly Disagree	5.2%	5
Totals	**100.0%**	**97**

Approximately 80% of delegation agreed or strongly agreed that more needs to be done to identify the community's capacity to respond (e.g., staff, programs, services, resources, reach into at risk youth, etc.) before a gang strategy is formulated for the Peel region.

10. **We must focus on identifying the needs, challenges and perspectives of front line organizations working with youth.**

CHOICE	%	COUNT
Strongly Agree	49.5%	47

Agree	38.9%	37
Neutral	5.3%	5
Disagree	3.2%	3
Strongly Disagree	3.2%	3
Totals	**100.0%**	**95**

Almost 90% of the delegation agreed or strongly agreed that more needs to be done to identify the challenges, needs and perspectives of front line agencies before a gang strategy is formulated for the Peel region.

11. Everything we need to know about why youth join gangs we already know.

CHOICE	%	COUNT
Strongly Agree	14.1%	13
Agree	19.6%	18
Neutral	13.0%	12
Disagree	18.5%	17
Strongly Disagree	34.8%	32
Totals	**100.0%**	**92**

As the data demonstrate, there was very little consensus on this question, with approximately half the sample disagreeing with the notion that we have sufficient knowledge about the drivers of gang involvement, with slightly less than half having a neutral or agree position.

12. Research and consultation should be led by suitably trained community members/organizations.

CHOICE	%	COUNT
Strongly Agree	39.8%	39

Agree	41.8%	41
Neutral	8.2%	8
Disagree	5.1%	5
Strongly Disagree	5.1%	5
Totals	**100.0%**	**98**

As the data demonstrate, approximately 80% of delegates agreed that further and on-going research and consultation in respect to the gang issue should be conducted by community members or organizations that are trained properly to do so.

13. Research and consultation should be led by an arms length, qualified entity.

CHOICE	%	COUNT
Strongly Agree	12.5%	10
Agree	11.3%	9
Neutral	22.5%	18
Disagree	28.8%	23
Strongly Disagree	25.0%	20
Totals	**100.0%**	**80**

As the data demonstrate, over 50% of delegates disagreed that additional research and consultation in respect to the gang issue should be conducted by an independent, arms-length entity, reinforcing the general view that the effort to define a gang strategy for Peel should be led by the community.

14. Our research priority should be qualitative.

CHOICE	%	COUNT
Strongly Agree	38.1%	37
Agree	30.9%	30

Neutral	24.7%	24
Disagree	4.1%	4
Strongly Disagree	2.1%	2
Totals	**100.0%**	**97**

Approximately 70% of delegates agreed or strongly agreed that additional research in respect to the gang issue should be qualitative in nature. Based on discussions during the two days, we suggest that this pertains to better understanding the nature of gang involvement (risk factors, nature of gang involvement, type of gang involvement) rather than additional research into the size or extent of the youth gang issue in Peel (e.g., number of gang members, breakdown by ethnocultural grouping), etc.

15. Our research priority should be quantitative.

CHOICE	%	COUNT
Strongly Agree	17.6%	15
Agree	45.9%	39
Neutral	23.5%	20
Disagree	8.2%	7
Strongly Disagree	4.7%	4
Totals	**100.0%**	**85**

Approximately 64% of delegates agreed or strongly agreed that additional research in respect to the gang issue should be quantitative in nature, thus suggesting, based on responses to item #14, that both qualitative and quantitative in nature. This supports our overall interpretation from the two day consultation that more research, of all kinds, needs to be undertaken before an effective gang strategy can be developed for the Peel Region.

16. I am willing/able to participate in research processes

CHOICE	%	COUNT
Strongly Agree	36.4%	32
Agree	37.5%	33
Neutral	19.3%	17

Disagree	4.5%	4
Strongly Disagree	2.3%	2
Totals	**100.0%**	**88**

Approximately 74% of delegates agreed or strongly agreed that they are willing to participate in the research process, again suggestive of a strong degree of commitment to the process of creating and implementing an effective Peel Region gang strategy.

17. **In the next 6 to 12 months, we will have sufficient credibility/awareness to generate good research insights.**

CHOICE	%	COUNT
Strongly Agree	10.9%	10
Agree	25.0%	23
Neutral	32.6%	30
Disagree	21.7%	20
Strongly Disagree	9.8%	9
Totals	100.0%	**92**

Just over a third of delegates agreed or strongly agreed that the "collective" – that is, the working group and other community partners that are engaged in the process of creating a Peel Region gang strategy – will have sufficient credibility and awareness in the next 6 to 12 months to generate good research findings. This finding suggests that more coalition building must take place first, including identifying and securing community partners, determining terms of reference for a working group, disseminating the purpose and need for a gang strategy, etc.

18. **We have the capacity to manage and action research findings.**

CHOICE	%	COUNT

Strongly Agree	3.7%	3
Agree	18.3%	15
Neutral	36.6%	30
Disagree	28.0%	23
Strongly Disagree	13.4%	11
Totals	**100.0%**	**82**

Over 22% of delegates agreed or strongly agreed that the group has the capacity to manage and act upon research findings on the gang issues, which demonstrates that more time and effort must be invested in developing a body or structure that can manage additional research findings.

19. **We need to incentive participation in research efforts**

CHOICE	%	COUNT
Strongly Agree	54.4%	49
Agree	31.1%	28
Neutral	10.0%	9
Disagree	2.2%	2
Strongly Disagree	2.2%	2
Totals	**100.0%**	**90**

Over 85% of delegates agreed or strongly agreed that incentives (financial or otherwise) should be provided to youth, front line agencies and others to participate in the research process. In particular, many comments were made in respect to the need to pay honorarium to youth who may participate in focus groups, key informant interviews and other qualitative research processes.

20. **A multi-stakeholder, diverse and representative coalition/working committee is the optimum vehicle to proceed with this file**

CHOICE	%	COUNT
Strongly Agree	56.7%	51
Agree	24.4%	22
Neutral	12.2%	11

Disagree	4.4%	4
Strongly Disagree	2.2%	2
Totals	**100.0%**	**90**

Over 81% of delegates agreed or strongly agreed that a multi-stakeholder coalition was the optimum vehicle to proceed with this issue, suggesting that the creation of such a group (or, building upon the existing working group created for the purposes of this Justice Canada grant).

21. **There are existing structures in place to move this agenda forward.**

CHOICE	%	COUNT
Strongly Agree	22.2%	18
Agree	22.2%	18
Neutral	28.4%	23
Disagree	17.3%	14
Strongly Disagree	9.9%	8
Totals	**100.0%**	**81**

Only 45% of delegates agreed or strongly agreed that there are existing structures or organizations in place that can take the lead in the development of a Peel Region gang strategy. This finding reinforces the previous findings that a purpose-built coalition should be developed and supported to bring a Peel Region gang strategy into fruition.

22. **I have the time, interest and ability to sit on a gang prevention coalition or working committee.**

CHOICE	%	COUNT
Strongly Agree	37.9%	33
Agree	33.3%	29
Neutral	14.9%	13
Disagree	5.7%	5

Strongly Disagree	8.0%	7
Totals	**100.0%**	**87**

Approximately 71% of delegates agreed or strongly agreed that they are willing to participate on a gang prevention coalition or some form of working committee, demonstrating a good deal of commitment to this process.

23. One organization should be entrusted to "quarterback" the work of the coalition.

CHOICE	%	COUNT
Strongly Agree	38.3%	36
Agree	25.5%	24
Neutral	16.0%	15
Disagree	9.6%	9
Strongly Disagree	10.6%	10
Totals	**100.0%**	**94**

Approximately 64% of delegates agreed or strongly agreed that one organization should take the lead in respect to forming a coalition and keeping it moving productively in the direction of a Peel Region gang strategy.

24. A suitable nominee for "quarterback" is:

CHOICE	%	COUNT
Safe City Mississauga	26.1%	24
Brampton Safe City	4.3%	4
United Way of Peel	10.9%	10
Existing regional government body or committee	16.3%	15
Youth serving agency	19.6%	18

Other	22.8%	21
Totals	**100.0%**	**92**

The data demonstrate a diversity of opinion in respect to which agency may lead this initiative with Safe City Mississauga garnering the most support in this regard.

25. **All stakeholders in coalition require training in consultation, community dialogue processes, etc.**

CHOICE	%	COUNT
Strongly Agree	49.5%	46
Agree	25.8%	24
Neutral	8.6%	8
Disagree	8.6%	8
Strongly Disagree	7.5%	7
Totals	**100.0%**	**93**

Approximately 75% of delegates agreed or strongly agreed that training in coalition building, consultation and other matters is required to ensure a successful gang strategy development effort.

26. **To ensure common vocabulary, all stakeholders require training in race, oppression and related issues.**

CHOICE	%	COUNT
Strongly Agree	60.9%	53
Agree	18.4%	16
Neutral	13.8%	12

Disagree	2.3%	2
Strongly Disagree	4.6%	4
Totals	**100.0%**	**87**

Approximately 80% of delegates agreed or strongly agreed that training in issues pertaining to race is required as part of the process of creating a relevant gang strategy for Peel Region.

27. In the next 12 months, the primary target of our education and awareness efforts should be:

CHOICE	%	COUNT
Youth at risk/youth involved in gangs	44.2%	38
Front line agencies and stakeholders	20.9%	18
Parents and caregivers	9.3%	8
The family unit	17.4%	15
The general public	4.7%	4
Other	3.5%	3
Totals	**100.0%**	**86**

Just under one-half of delegates selected youth at risk or involved in gangs as the primary focus of education and awareness efforts, followed by front-line agencies working with same youth.

28. Our prevention and intervention focus should be on proven best practice approaches.

CHOICE	%	COUNT
Strongly Agree	29.4%	25
Agree	31.8%	27
Neutral	22.4%	19
Disagree	10.6%	9
Strongly Disagree	5.9%	5
Totals	**100.0%**	**85**

Approximately 60% of delegates agreed or strongly agreed that with respect to prevention and intervention strategies, Peel Region should employ proven, best practice models.

29. **Our prevention and intervention focus should be on knowledge discovery (e.g., create, implement "grass roots" programs).**

CHOICE	%	COUNT
Strongly Agree	36.9%	31
Agree	44.0%	37
Neutral	15.5%	13
Disagree	1.2%	1
Strongly Disagree	2.4%	2
Totals	100.0%	84

Approximately 70% of delegates agreed or strongly agreed that with respect to prevention and intervention strategies, Peel Region should employ grass-roots program that may or may not be proven effective or demonstrated later, through evaluation, to be effective.

30. **With respect to prevention and intervention, our primary age cohort focus should be:**

CHOICE	%	COUNT
0 to 5	0.0%	0
6 to 11	47.1%	41
12 to 17	49.4%	43
18 to 30	2.3%	2
30+	1.1%	1
Totals	100.0%	87

Over 96% of delegates noted that the age focus of a Peel Region gang strategy should be 6 to 17 with the 12 to 17 age cohort representing the highest agreement with just under 50% of the sample.

31. With respect to prevention and intervention, our primary ethnocultural focus should be:

Choice	%	Count
African/Caribbean Canadian	39.8%	35
First Nations, Metis, Inuit	2.3%	2
South Asian	0.0%	0
Other	3.4%	3
Universal focus	54.5%	48
Totals	**100.0%**	**88**

Over half of delegates noted that the proposed gang prevention/intervention strategy should be universal in focus, with just under 40% of delegates noting that it should focus on African/Caribbean Canadian youth.

32. I found this exercise to be a worthwhile endeavor.

Choice	%	Count
Strongly Agree	28.9%	22
Agree	28.9%	22
Neutral	21.1%	16
Disagree	18.4%	14
Strongly Disagree	2.6%	2
Totals	**100.0%**	**76**

Approximately 60% of the delegation found the two-day consultation to be a worthwhile

endeavor.

33. I know more about the Peel Region gang situation today relative to before this gathering.

CHOICE	%	COUNT
Strongly Agree	24.1%	21
Agree	32.2%	28
Neutral	12.6%	11
Disagree	18.4%	16
Strongly Disagree	12.6%	11
Totals	**100.0%**	**87**

Only 56% of delegates agreed or strongly agreed that they learned something about the gang situation in Peel as a result of participating in the consultation. It should be noted, however, that the consultation was not designed to be a gang training session, but one focused on identify key issues related to the formation of a Peel Region gang strategy.

34. I am cautiously optimistic that we are on the right track to create a Peel Region wide gang strategy.

CHOICE	%	COUNT
Strongly Agree	12.4%	11
Agree	47.2%	42
Neutral	23.6%	21
Disagree	9.0%	8
Strongly Disagree	7.9%	7
Totals	**100.0%**	**89**

Approximately 60% of delegates agreed or strongly agreed that the Region is on the right

track in regards to the creation of a Peel Region gang strategy.

35. **This gathering was worthwhile from a networking perspective.**

Choice	%	Count
Strongly Agree	47.1%	40
Agree	34.1%	29
Neutral	8.2%	7
Disagree	4.7%	4
Strongly Disagree	5.9%	5
Totals	**100.0%**	**85**

Over 80% of delegates agreed or strongly agreed that the consultation was worthwhile from a networking perspective.

36. **I am satisfied with the performance of Safe City Mississauga and the initial working committee.**

Choice	%	Count
Strongly Agree	40.2%	35
Agree	43.7%	38
Neutral	9.2%	8
Disagree	5.7%	5
Strongly Disagree	1.1%	1
Totals	**100.0%**	**87**

Over 83% of delegates agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with the performance of SCM during the two day consultation.

37. I am satisfied with the performance of Facilitator over the past two days.

CHOICE	%	COUNT
Strongly Agree	28.4%	25
Agree	29.5%	26
Neutral	23.9%	21
Disagree	9.1%	8
Strongly Disagree	9.1%	8
Totals	**100.0%**	**88**

Approximately 60% of delegates agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with the performance of the facilitator during the two day consultation.

SECTION 4

RECOMMENDATIONS

Safe City Mississauga's (SCM) objective in completing this project was to commence the process of creating an integrated, well-informed youth gang prevention and intervention strategy for the Peel Region.

Recognizing that the organization could not simply unilaterally dictate the form or scope of a gang strategy for Peel, it correctly began its work through engaging a variety of community stakeholders in an initial consultation and fact-finding process. Through this approach, it was assumed, SCM and its partners could form an embryonic "coalition of the willing", to identify the key issues for future consideration and study, as well as obtain initial data to inform next steps. SCM was exceedingly careful and measured in its communication, to ensure no stakeholder had the expectation that either this initial project would result in a gang strategy, or that SCM was assuming the automatic lead in its formulation.

From this perspective, SCM demonstrated great success and achieved, we believe, the expectations it set with its funder (Justice Canada). This initial project resulted in an excellent array of opinion from both the community and stakeholders (such as police, educators, youth serving agencies, among others), as well as from 130+ delegates at the two-day consultation. Together, we believe SCM and the working committee of partners, has sufficient information, direction, goodwill and momentum to continue, together or in expanded form, the process of crafting an effective youth gang strategy for the Peel Region.

As we shared with the working committee on several occasions and with the consultation delegation, the development of a community gang strategy – especially for a community as large and diverse as Peel - is a long term, iterative process. Other communities who have undertaken similar efforts, such as Ottawa (Crime Prevention Ottawa) and Edmonton (Community Solutions to Gang Violence), have worked hard over several years to craft and implement an effective community plan with work continuing to this very day. We can expect that Peel will experience a similar long-term process of community mobilization, engagement, resource development, evaluation, and other activities, before it can properly arrive at a "Peel Region Gang Strategy".

There is ample "food for thought" in this report and encourage the reader to formulate their own opinion in respect to next steps. Notwithstanding, we offer the following recommendations for consideration:

1. SCM demonstrated great capability in this program and should be accorded respect and gratitude for bringing together a wide diversity of partners for the purposes of a working committee. Together with their partners, a successful community survey, stakeholder survey and consultation was completed, rendering high quality actionable information. It is clear to us, from this process, that there must be an agency that takes the lead in the continuing process of community mobilization, until such time as a self-sustaining "multi-stakeholder coalition" is formed. Absent this leadership, we fear that the early momentum gained will be lost. To that end, we recommend that Safe City Mississauga continue to take the lead and build upon the results of this program. Their mandate is fully consistent with the nature of the task, and their staff resources are capable, committed and sufficient in quantity to ensure the Peel Region moves closer to the vision of a mobilized, diverse strategy body.

2. Related to the above, we recommend that SCM identify and pursue a "phase two" source of funds to continue with its work of coalition building and community mobilization. Discussions should occur with various bodies, including but not limited to Justice Canada, Ministry of Children and Youth Services (Youth Justice Services), Public Safety Canada, the Regional Municipality of Peel and others, to identify whether additional funds can be secured.

3. Both the surveys and the consultation demonstrated consensus that more needs to be done to study the youth gang issue from the perspective of youth (especially racialized and marginalized youth who may be at higher risk of gang involvement, as well as youth who are or were gang involved), youth serving agencies and grass roots agencies that serve minority groups. Assuming that additional operating funds can be secured, we recommend that additional effort be made to consult with these groups so that their perspectives can be gained and triangulated with what we already have learned. Related to this, the consultation demonstrated that delegates have a preference for qualitative research, rather than quantitative in regards to the size or scope of the gang issue.

4. Again contingent on funding, we recommend that SCM undertake to broaden its working committee to include other groups not initially represented. This should certainly include groups that represent the African/Caribbean Canadian diaspora, the South Asian community and First Nations/Metis peoples. We also recommend the creation of a more fulsome terms of reference, so that prospective members of an expanded committee have a clear idea of what is expected of them, including time, resources, data, or even financial contribution, as the case may be.

5. It was apparent from the consultation that there is some tension between the Peel Regional Police Service and the "community", in respect to youth policing practices, the

perceived level of mistrust, and other considerations. We believe that questions posed by the delegation to the Peel Regional Police Service were proffered in good faith and were reasonable, and therefore should be answered by the police in good faith within reasonable bounds of operational practice. The Peel Regional Police Service is a progressive agency and has done an excellent job engaging with the community and stimulating preventative actions against crime. They are an essential partner in the vision of a mobilized community against gangs, and therefore we believe it is important for them to continue to build bridges with grass roots community agencies.

6. Related to Recommendation #5, there was a general sense from the delegation that not enough information was shared in respect to the parameters of the gang issue in Peel. We therefore recommend that SCM ask the Peel Regional Police to either hold a public forum on youth gangs, where they can share additional information in respect to the scope of the gang problem, the characteristics of gang involvement, the communities that are deemed at most risk, as well as the Service's operational priorities in terms of gang enforcement and suppression, or publish some form of document addressing same. This information will satisfy the community's thirst for more knowledge about gangs and the risks posed thereof, but at the same time help the community craft a measured response to youth gang issues.

7. Many participants at our consultation spoke of the duplication in services in Peel, so we recommend that SCM or another group conduct an inventory of program assets (type of program, objectives, format, location, costs, capacity, etc.) in the region but particularly in any "priority" communities that may be identified in consultation with the Peel Regional Police Service. Such an inventory will allow SCM to map program assets to trouble spots, and therefore target prevention efforts more wisely in those areas with more acute youth gang problems As an example, SCM may wish to utilize a similar approach to that employed by Edmonton's CSGV, where they created an on-line gang prevention program matrix, "designed to gather information on agencies, programs, services and best practices that build protective factors around children and young people that enable them to resist gang involvement and that promote positive healthy development". Related to this, the MCYS Youth Justice Services group had embarked upon a similar exercise in respect to their "Provincial Gang Strategy for Youth in Custody", so there may be some collaborative opportunities present in this regard.

8. In addition to creating an inventory of local program assets, we recommend that SCM undertake research to identify best and promising practices in youth gang prevention from Canada, the United States and elsewhere. This information should be posted on-line for partners to access. On this, we recommend specific attention be paid to the OJJDP "Comprehensive Gang Prevention Model", a.k.a. the Spergel Model, which we believe has great merit for this community. Michael Chettleburgh has studied the model extensively, has built a comprehensive evaluation framework for the model and

had consulted extensively with Dr. Spergel before his passing, and would be pleased to brief SCM and its partners on the model and its relevancy to the Peel Region.

9. We believe that the majority of insights derived from this process are sound and reasonable and are worthy of serious consideration. At the same time, we have the sense that the "coalition" is indeed young and as a result, survey/consultation participants favour a go-slow approach consisting of additional research and consultation. This is a reasonable perspective, however, it must be balanced by some purposeful action that begins to address some of the key gang issues. To this end, we recommend that while SCM is continuing to mobilize the community and build its coalition, that a high value project be initiated, for example, the development of fact sheets or other education/awareness materials highlighting, for example, the nature of the Peel gang problem, how to prevent youth involvement in gangs, etc. Other jurisdictions have undertaken similar programs including Justice Manitoba, Calgary Police Service, Edmonton Police Services, etc. Of course, the development of these materials should feature the participation of partners and the community to ensure they are relevant and effective in community key messages that contribute to gang prevention.

10. To ensure the community remains apprised of developments on this file, SCM may wish to create a web or paper based communiqué and distribute to all interested parties. This will be a good way to maintain engagement and generate additional insights for consideration.

SECTION 5

MORE INFORMATION

Questions or comments can be directed to:

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