

An Executive Summary of the Results of the Village Community Survey

I The Survey

In order to elicit feedback on current police deployments, procedures, and practices from all Alfred Communities, the Alfred Village Community Survey was prepared using Microsoft Forms and opened to the public for a six-week period between mid-November and the end of December, 2020. Members of the Community could complete the survey online or ask for a hardcopy from the Village Clerk. The survey was highlighted in the weekly Village newsletter, referenced in the Alfred Sun, mentioned on Village social media channels, and distributed as a postcard to local businesses and directly to marginalized, underrepresented, and minoritized residents. As per the Governor's Executive Order 203, critical questions were included on the survey to measure the community's current sense of trust in the Alfred Village Police and to assess the community's perceptions of fairness versus bias in policing practices.

A total of 504 surveys were opened online (and assigned ID numbers by Microsoft Forms). Not every respondent answered every question; in fact, 2 surveys were completely blank and 3 included only demographic information. All of the frequency analyses reported herein are based on a total of 499 respondents or, as appropriate, on the number of participants who gave valid responses to the specific question. All of the responses to the survey are presented in an anonymized format in an Excel spreadsheet labeled Appendix A for Executive Summary.

II Constituencies included in the Survey

The survey asked participants to provide information on six demographic characteristics, including their Role in the Village, their Gender Identity, Racial and Ethnic Identity, Age, and Household income. The pool of respondents had the following characteristics.

Primary Role

Table 1 presents the number (and percentage) of respondents who self-described as Residents, Landlords, Business Owners, Alfred University employees or students, Alfred State College employees or students, Village employees, or as regular Visitors to the Village. Note: Many respondents reported multiple roles, so the totals on Table 1 exceed the 504 total surveys.

Table 1 Frequency Counts and Percentages of Roles in the Village

Role	N	%	Role (cont)	N	%
Home Owner	81	16.3%	AU Student	59	11.8%
Non-student Tenant	13	2.6%	ASC Student	198	39.8%
Landlord	7	1.4%	AU Employee	106	21.3%
Business Owner	12	2.4%	ASC Employee	54	10.8%
Village Employee	14	2.8%	Regular Visitor	31	6.2%
Other Village Role	15	3.0%			

Throughout the remainder of this executive summary, respondents were assigned a single "primary role" within the village as follows: If they said they are a student, that was determined to be their primary role.

For non-students, they were coded as "Resident" if they reported being a homeowner or a non-student tenant. For non-residents, they were coded as an "Employee" if they work at either college or in/or for the Village. Non-resident Business Owners and Landlords were combined into a single group, and the Regular Visitors who play no other role constitute the final "Primary Role" category.

Gender, Race, and Ethnicity

Table 2 presents the number (and percentage) of respondents who self-described as Female, Male, Non-Binary, or other. It also shows the number of respondents who reported their Racial Identity as Caucasian, African American, Asian American, Native American, Middle-Eastern or North African, Pacific Islander, or as a mix of two or more races. A total of 423 (88.3%) of the respondents reported being Non-Hispanic, while only 22 (4.6%) said they are Hispanic and 34 (7.1%) said their ethnicity is unknown.

When compared to the most recent 2019 Census data for Alfred, our sample over-represented White or Caucasians (89.5% versus 75.6%). Similarly, the 2019 IPEDS data from both colleges indicate smaller percentages of White/Caucasians than we found in our sample (72.6% for ASC and 52.1% for AU). For Blacks or African Americans, our sample (3.4%) under-represents the population in the Village (8.0%) and the colleges (ASC = 13.3%; AU= 12.7%). The other Racial Identity categories were fairly consistent with the census and IPEDS data or slightly under-represented in the sample of survey respondents.

Table 2 Frequency Counts and Percentages of Gender Identity, Racial Identity, and Ethnicity

Gender Identity	N	%		Racial Identity	N	%		Ethnicity	N	%
Female	243	48.5%		White or Caucasian	444	89.5%		Hispanic	22	4.6%
Male	230	45.9%		Black or African American	17	3.4%		Non-Hispanic	423	88.3%
Non-Binary	7	1.4%		Asian or Asian American	8	1.6%		Unknown	34	6.7%
Prefer to Not Say	17	3.4%		Middle Eastern or North African	1	0.2%				
Other	4	0.8%		Native American	2	0.4%				
				Two or More Races	24	4.8%				

Age and Income

Frequency data for Age and Household income are presented in Table 3. Respondents ranged in age from Under 18 to 75 or Older and their income ranged from Under \$15,000 to over \$150,000.

Table 3 Frequency Counts and Percentages of Age Group and Household Income

Age Group	N	%	Household Income	N	%
Under 18	5	1.0%	Under \$15,000	65	13.8%
18 to 24	240	47.6%	\$15,000 to \$29,999	44	9.3%
25 to 34	60	11.9%	\$30,000 to \$49,999	66	14.0%
35 to 44	57	11.3%	\$50,000 to \$74,000	97	20.6%
45 to 54	55	10.9%	\$75,000 to \$99,999	83	17.6%
55 to 64	51	10.1%	\$100,000 to \$149,999	90	19.1%
65 to 74	20	4.0%	\$150,00 or more	26	5.5%
75 or older	11	2.2%			

III Interaction with Alfred Village Police

The survey asked respondents if they have had direct interaction with the Alfred Village Police Department. More than half of the respondents (55.1%) said "Yes" and others either said "No" (39.3%) or left the item blank (5.6%). The survey also asked about interaction with other law enforcement agencies, including Alfred State College's University Police Department, Alfred University's Public Safety Office, Allegany County's Sheriff's Department, and the New York State Troopers, but for purposes of the Executive Order 203, this report focuses only on the Alfred Village Police Department (APD).

It should be noted that some respondents (particularly college students) may not differentiate among these agencies, and some of their comments may not actually apply to APD specifically. Unless this confusion was explicitly identifiable (such as be reference to campus issues), responses were treated as if they were directed at APD because most questions on the survey asked only about the Village Police department.

Many of the respondents who indicated they have *not* had direct interaction with APD proceeded to answer other questions (such as how they would categorize their interactions with the Village police), so the community's views about policing is broken into two groups: Respondents who reported having direct interaction with APD and those who said they had not had direct contact with APD, and may be presenting their perceptions of the police.

IV Current Views of the Alfred Village Police

While the survey included a number of important questions targeting specific policing issues (such as "Police officers are a necessary part of the community" and "The Alfred Village Police Department is held accountable for their actions"), this executive summary focuses on four more general questions that would seem to capture a sense of the community's current view of the APD's performance. These questions included # 15 ("Overall, how would you categorize your interactions with Alfred Village Police Department?"), # 22 ("I trust the Alfred Village Police Department"), # 24 ("The Alfred Village Police Department makes decisions based on bias toward certain groups"), and # 30 ("How satisfied are you with

the performance of the Alfred Village Police Department?") The responses provided by the different constituencies within the community were examined in an effort to identify perceptions of potentially disproportionate policing.

Appendix B for the Executive Summary includes the full set of Frequency Tables from the analysis of the survey. In order to make the data in the remainder of this executive summary manageable, however, the responses to each of the key questions were collapsed into "positive or neutral" versus "negative or other" views of the APD, and only the frequencies and percentages of respondents with *negative* views are presented. Additionally, due to the small number of respondents from several of the Racial Identity categories, the Asian, Native American, Middle Eastern and Pacific Islanders and Mixed Race groups were combined into a single category. Likewise, Gender Identity was collapsed into only three groups: Female, Male, and Other. Finally, the data for Age and Household Income are not summarized in this executive summary.

A Quality of Interaction with APD (Question # 15)

After being asked to identify the nature of their interactions with APD (such as traffic stops investigations, etc.), respondents were asked to rate the quality of their overall interactions with APD as positive, neutral, negative, or other. Table 4 presents the frequency counts (and percentages) for the 392 respondents who answered both of the relevant survey questions. The data shows that less than 10% of all respondents judged their overall interactions with APD to be negative. Table 5 then shows how the negative attitudes are distributed across Roles, Gender Identity, and Racial Identity and Ethnicity. [Remember that the totals across the sub-tables may not match due to missing answers.]

Table 4 Frequency Counts and Percentages for Ratings of Overall Interaction with APD

		Quality of Overall Interaction with APD					
			Positive	Neutral	Negative	Other	TOTAL
Direct Interaction with APD	Yes	N	50	66	8	2	126
		%	39.7%	52.4%	6.3%	1.6%	
	No	N	167	70	29	0	266
		%	62.8%	26.3%	10.9%	0.0%	
	TOTAL	N	217	136	37	2	392
		%	55.4%	34.7%	9.4%	0.5%	

Table 5 Frequencies/Percentages of Constituents With **Negative** Overall Interactions with APD

Demographic:			Direct Interaction with APD		Percent of Group
			Yes	No	
Primary Role	Student (N = 257)	N	18	8	10.1%
	Resident (non-Student) (N = 97)	N	5	0	5.2%
	Employee (N = 118)	N	4	2	5.1%
	Business Owner/Landlord (N = 5)	N	1	0	20.0%
	Regular Visitor (N= 21)	N	1	0	4.8%
	TOTAL # with Negative View	N	29	10	39
	Percent of Entire Sample (N = 392)	%	7.4%	2.6%	9.9%
Gender Identity	Female (N = 243)	N	11	3	5.8%
	Male (N =230)	N	12	6	7.8%
	Other (N = 28)	N	3	1	14.3%
	TOTAL # with Negative View	N	26	10	36
	Percent of Entire Sample (N = 392)	%	6.6%	2.6%	9.4%
Racial Identity	White or Caucasian (N = 444)	N	25	8	7.4%
	Black or African American (N = 17)	N	1	0	5.9%
	Other (N = 35)	N	3	2	14.3%
	TOTAL # with Negative View	N	29	10	39
	Percent of Entire Sample (N = 387)	%	7.5%	2.6%	10.1%
Ethnicity	Hispanic (N = 22)	N	0	1	4.5%
	Non-Hispanic (N = 423)	N	22	9	7.3%
	Unknown (N = 34)	N	5	0	14.7%
	TOTAL # with Negative View	N	27	10	37
	Percent of Entire Sample (N = 373)	%	7.2%	2.7%	9.9%

Examining the last column in Table 5, we see that for each demographic variable, most categories reported a lower-than-average number of negative interactions with APD (i.e., less than the sample average of about 10%). For Primary Role, Students and Business Owners/Landlords are more likely to report negative interactions than others. The negative response rate for students was just slightly above the sample average of 10%, and there were only 5 Business Owners/Landlords in the sample, so a single negative response constitutes 20% of that group. For Gender Identity, the respondents who do not identify as male or female (i.e., the “other” category) more likely to report negative interactions than others.

For Racial Identity, a higher proportion of negative responses came from respondents who do not identify as White/Caucasian or Black/African American. Finally, a higher percentage of people who reported their Ethnic heritage as "unknown" report having had negative interactions with APD. Because our sample may under-represent these groups in the Alfred community, we recommend that follow-up surveys be conducted where every effort is made to get fully representative samples. Alternatively, focus groups could be utilized in order to determine whether there is a pattern of biased policing toward certain groups versus others.

B Trust in Alfred Village Police (Question # 22)

Question # 22 on the survey asked participants to respond to the statement "I trust the Alfred Village Police" on a 5-point scale from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree." Table 6 presents the number of participants who disagreed or strongly disagreed to that statement.

Table 6 Frequencies/Percentages of Constituents Who Do Not Trust APD

Demographic:			Direct Interaction with APD		Percent of Group
			Yes	No	
Primary Role	Student (N = 257)	N	22	21	16.7%
	Resident (non-Student) (N = 97)	N	5	1	6.2%
	Employee (N = 118)	N	8	5	11.0%
	Business Owner/Landlord (N = 5)	N	1	0	20.0%
	Regular Visitor (N= 21)	N	2	1	14.3%
	TOTAL # with Negative View	N	38	28	66
	Percent of Entire Sample (N = 464)	%	8.2%	6.0%	14.2%
Gender Identity	Female (N = 243)	N	18	14	13.2%
	Male (N =230)	N	13	10	10.0%
	Other (N = 28)	N	8	4	42.9%
	TOTAL # with Negative View	N	39	28	67
	Percent of Entire Sample (N = 466)	%	8.4%	6.0%	14.4%
Racial Identity	White or Caucasian (N = 444)	N	34	20	12.2%
	Black or African American (N = 17)	N	1	4	29.4%
	Other (N = 35)	N	4	3	20.0%
	TOTAL # with Negative View	N	39	27	66
	Percent of Entire Sample (N = 462)	%	8.4%	5.8%	14.3%
Ethnicity	Hispanic (N = 22)	N	0	3	13.6%
	Non-Hispanic (N = 423)	N	34	23	13.5%
	Unknown (N = 34)	N	3	2	14.7%
	TOTAL # with Negative View	N	37	28	65
	Percent of Entire Sample (N = 447)	%	8.3%	6.3%	14.5%

Overall, Table 6 indicates that over 14% of the respondents do not trust APD. This distrust is more strongly felt by some groups than others. The pattern is very similar to the pattern for Question # 15 (presented in Table 5 above): For Primary Role, the categories of Students and one Business Owner/Landlord reported more distrust than average; for Gender Identity, the respondents who do not identify as Male or Female reported more distrust than average; for Ethnicity, the respondents whose ethnicity is unknown reported more distrust than average; and for Racial Identity, both Black/African American and the other non-Caucasian respondents reported more distrust than average.

Again, the underrepresentation of the minority Racial and Ethnic groups in our survey sample and the pattern of results support our recommendation of follow-up surveys and/or focus groups.

C APD Makes Decisions Based on Bias Toward Certain Groups (Question # 24)

Survey Question # 24 asked respondents to rate their level of agreement with the statement "The Alfred Village Police Department makes decisions based on bias toward certain groups" on a 5-point scale from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree." The number (and percentages) of participants who indicated they agree or strongly agree with the statement are presented in Table 7.

Table 7 Frequencies/Percentages of Constituents Who Believe APD Makes Decisions Based on Bias

Demographic:			Direct Interaction with APD		Percent of Group
			Yes	No	
Primary Role	Student (N = 257)	N	28	32	23.3%
	Resident (non-Student) (N = 97)	N	23	3	26.8%
	Employee (N = 118)	N	18	9	22.9%
	Business Owner/Landlord (N = 5)	N	1	0	20.0%
	Regular Visitor (N= 21)	N	2	1	14.3%
	TOTAL # with Negative View	N	72	45	117
	Percent of Entire Sample (N = 460)	%	15.7%	9.8%	25.4%
Gender Identity	Female (N = 243)	N	38	23	25.1%
	Male (N =230)	N	29	20	21.3%
	Other (N = 28)	N	6	2	28.6%
	TOTAL # with Negative View	N	73	45	118
	Percent of Entire Sample (N = 462)	%	15.8%	9.7%	25.5%
Racial Identity	White or Caucasian (N = 444)	N	64	12	17.1%
	Black or African American (N = 17)	N	2	2	23.5%
	Other (N = 35)	N	6	1	20.0%
	TOTAL # with Negative View	N	72	15	87
	Percent of Entire Sample (N = 458)	%	15.7%	3.3%	19.0%
Ethnicity	Hispanic (N = 22)	N	3	5	36.4%
	Non-Hispanic (N = 423)	N	63	38	23.9%
	Unknown (N = 34)	N	6	1	20.6%
	TOTAL # with Negative View	N	72	44	116
	Percent of Entire Sample (N = 443)	%	16.3%	9.9%	26.2%

The results for Question # 24 are striking. Approximately one-quarter -- about 25% -- of the survey respondents believe that the Alfred Village Police makes biased decisions. The survey did not ask respondents to identify specific targeted groups, so these responses could refer to racial or ethnic biases or biases toward students, or even gender biases. It is incumbent on APD to identify and rectify any such bias that may be implicitly impacting their policing practices. To that end, we recommend that officers keep records of the gender and race of every encounter with citizens (perhaps just the simple dichotomies of male versus female and White versus Non-White) so that periodic reviews of the records would reveal unequal treatment of these groups.

It should be noted that this question was the only item on the survey phrased in a negative direction (so that "Agreeing" with the statement would reflect a negative view of APD). It is possible some percentage of the respondents did not notice the change in phrasing. No effort was made to review all 499 surveys to identify any that appeared to give a contradictory response to Question # 24.

D Satisfaction with the Performance of APD (Question # 30)

Respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with the performance of the Alfred Village Department on a 7-point scale ranging from "Very Satisfied" to "Very Dissatisfied." Table 8 presents the number (and percentages) of participants who indicated they were at all dissatisfied (i.e., "Somewhat Dissatisfied," "Dissatisfied," or "Very Dissatisfied").

Table 8 Frequencies/Percentages of Constituents Who Are Dissatisfied with APD's Performance

Demographic:			Direct Interaction with APD		Percent of Group
			Yes	No	
Primary Role	Student (N = 257)	N	20	10	11.7%
	Resident (non-Student) (N = 97)	N	9	1	10.3%
	Employee (N = 118)	N	8	4	10.2%
	Business Owner/Landlord (N = 5)	N	1	0	20.0%
	Regular Visitor (N= 21)	N	2	1	14.3%
	TOTAL # with Negative View	N	40	16	56
	Percent of Entire Sample (N = 461)	%	8.7%	3.5%	12.1%
Gender Identity	Female (N = 243)	N	20	7	11.1%
	Male (N =230)	N	14	7	9.1%
	Other (N = 28)	N	7	2	32.1%
	TOTAL # with Negative View	N	41	16	57
	Percent of Entire Sample (N = 463)	%	8.9%	3.5%	12.3%
Racial Identity	White or Caucasian (N = 444)	N	37	12	11.0%
	Black or African American (N = 17)	N	1	2	17.6%
	Other (N = 35)	N	3	1	11.4%
	TOTAL # with Negative View	N	41	15	56
	Percent of Entire Sample (N = 459)	%	8.9%	3.3%	12.2%
Ethnicity	Hispanic (N = 22)	N	0	2	9.1%
	Non-Hispanic (N = 423)	N	33	13	10.9%
	Unknown (N = 34)	N	4	1	14.7%
	TOTAL # with Negative View	N	37	16	53
	Percent of Entire Sample (N = 444)	%	8.3%	3.6%	11.9%

Despite the number of respondents who reported a degree of distrust in APD and the sense that APD makes decisions based on bias toward certain groups, about 88% of the respondents report being satisfied with the performance of the APD. Consistent with the patterns for the two previous questions, less satisfaction is reported by some demographic groups more than others, and most often it is the under-represented groups reporting negative views of APD. This further supports our recommendation that further research be conducted with these constituencies.

V Suggestions from Survey Respondents for Improving Policing in the Village

An open-ended question on the survey (# 16) asked respondents "What would be the single biggest change that would improve policing in the village community?" This question served as an indirect means of identifying concerns not explicitly addressed by other survey questions. The suggestions provided by the community members were coded into "areas of concern" (or "themes") and the number of respondents expressing the same or similar themes was examined.

A total of 297 respondents -- almost 60% of the total sample -- answered Question # 16, and altogether, they made 362 suggestions or identified areas of concern. These areas of concern included references to the (a) Need (or not) for General Changes, (b) Daily Activities of the Police (including patrols and enforcement of laws), (c) Officers' interactions with Citizens and Community Engagement, and (d) Staffing and Funding for the Department. There were a handful of responses (16) that were explicitly referring to issues that are not the responsibility of the Alfred Village Police (such as campus patrols and parking) or simply uninterpretable. Table 9 presents a summary of the comments and suggestions made by the respondents for improving policing in the village of Alfred.

Table 9 Suggestions for Changes to Improve Policing in the Village of Alfred

Areas of Concern	Number of Respondents Suggesting Improvement	Some Key Findings of Note
General Changes to Policing (including scope of responsibility and accountability)	57	81% of these comments said "No Changes are Needed." Another 7% called for a reduction in the scope of responsibilities for APD.
Police Daily Activities and Law Enforcement (including patrols, timeliness of response, and enforcement of traffic, parking and other local laws)	86	74% called for increases, while 26% called for decreases
Officers' Personal Interaction with Citizens and Community Engagement (including officers' demeanor, attitude, biased responses. Also including improvement in citizen's response to police)	124	19% of these comments called for citizen's to be more knowledgeable and respectful of the police, and 44% called for increases in Police Officers' integration into and interaction with the community.
Staffing and Funding for APD (including the number of and diversity among officers, training for officers, and funding for policing)	70	Only 7% of responses called for a reduction in staffing or funding. The most common recommendations were for increased diversity in staffing (11%) and increased Diversity and Anti-Bias training (23%).

VI Conclusion

Based on the survey responses from 499 members of the Alfred community, as summarized in this report, we recommend the following changes to current policing procedures and practices:

1. The Alfred Village Police should strive to reduce the perceptions within the community that they do not treat all members of the community in a fair and unbiased manner. To that end, we recommend:
 - a. that APD officers continue to participate in anti-bias training on a regular basis and that they make every effort to ensure that they practice those principles in every interaction with every member of the community; and
 - b. That officers keep records of the gender and race of every encounter with citizens (perhaps just the simple dichotomies of male versus female and White versus Non-White) so that periodic reviews of the records would reveal unequal treatment of these groups. While arrest records include this data, other incidents that do not result in arrest or a ticket may not have this data recorded. For example, by including gender and race information on reports of traffic stops where no ticket is issued, officers will be able to discern hidden patterns in their decisions where members of one class are more likely to be ticketed than others. As a second example, when officers are talking to individuals about pressing charges against another, a record of the gender and race of everyone involved will allow officers to determine if they seem to give advice that is biased toward different groups.
2. That APD find additional ways to engage in positive interactions with the entire community in an effort to offset the negative views and lack of trust expressed by fairly substantial percentages of the community.

The Alfred Committee on Equity and Safety (ACES) plans to continue gathering data from the community and, in particular, the constituencies that were under-represented in the Fall 2020 survey. The goal will be to identify areas of concern and to develop programs -- not limited to policing practices -- that will make Alfred a more welcoming and inclusive place to live, work, and study.