



Cascade Campus' Public Safety Offices **Redevelopment** **Spring 2021 Outreach Report**

Prepared by We All Rise



**Portland
Community
College**

Planning & Capital
Construction

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Executive Summary

This document serves as a summary of We All Rise’s findings from stakeholder outreach and engagement during the feasibility study to inform the final placement of the Public Safety offices and inform initial design features of the new structure or renovation. This project is funded as part of the 2017 bond allocating funds for repairs, renovations, safety improvements, and new technology at Portland Community College.

Project Overview

As part of the 2017 bond approved by voters which funds capital construction projects, Portland Community College is planning to redevelop the Cascade Campus’ Public Safety building. The current building has a poor layout, provides insufficient space, lacks specific facilities needed for delivering public safety services, and is not centrally located on campus; it will need to be rebuilt or the Public Safety offices will need to be relocated.

A feasibility study was conducted by DAO Architecture between October 2020 and April 2021 to help the college consider different options for the new Public Safety offices and ultimately select a final location. Stakeholder engagement, which gathers community feedback and preferences surrounding the available options, is an essential component of the feasibility study.

DAO Architecture’s feasibility study narrowed down potential options for the new Public Safety offices to the current Public Safety Building site (PSB) and the Public Services Education Building (PSEB).

Public Safety Building (PSB)

Located at the edge of campus, a new building on site of the current Public Safety Building would offer opportunities to engage with the public and surrounding communities, be adjacent to vehicle and bike parking, could be sized and configured to

meet the Public Safety department's needs, would neither conflict nor synergize with other campus programs, and not cause any programs to be relocated. The site would also allow for the creation of a generously-sized meeting room which would help create a welcoming atmosphere.

Public Services Education Building (PSEB)

To house the Public Safety offices at the Public Services Education Building (PSEB), the building would need to be renovated. The location, situated along the central axis of the Cascade Campus, offers the Public Safety department an opportunity for greater integration with the campus community. The building also has a more direct access to the exterior and interior of the existing buildings, offers potential synergies with existing PSEB programs, and requires reorganizing of existing offices within the building.

Outreach Methodology

The Public Safety Building site and the Public Services Education Building were identified by DAO and PCC as viable options for the new Public Safety offices. To ensure that the selection of the final location reflects community values, preferences, needs, and concerns, We All Rise worked with PCC to design and lead a stakeholder engagement strategy to gather stakeholder perspectives on the PSB and PSEB sites, better understand community perceptions of a safe learning environment, and begin conceptualizing design elements for the new space.

Outreach during the feasibility study phase took place between April 5, 2021 and May 3, 2021. The project team sent out a community mailer and email to inform community members about the project and encourage participation in public engagement opportunities. These opportunities included a survey, small group conversations with the project team, and a community forum. The project team also presented at the PCC Cascade Campus Diversity Council and the Humboldt Neighborhood Association to outline the project and receive input on contributors to a safe learning environment.

Evaluation

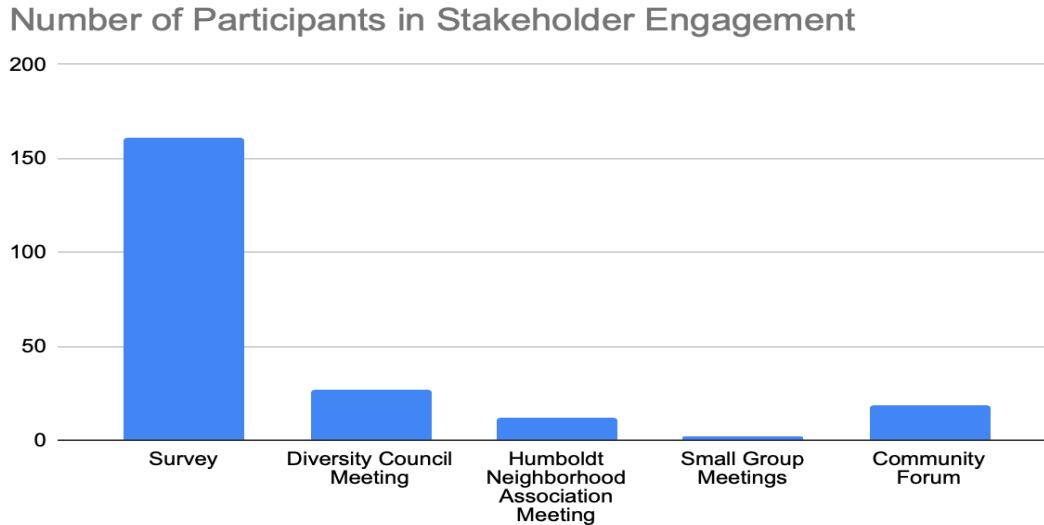
In evaluating stakeholder feedback, We All Rise employed a diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) nexus to identify a tangible process to interview, code, and recommend future actions. This approach centers Critical Race Theory (CRT) – a paradigm and a practice that challenges dominant systems on race, racism, and inequality and asks us to examine how and why practices and policies were created as a means of challenging institutionalized forms of oppression – at every stage of the stakeholder outreach and engagement process, and emphasizes feedback from historically marginalized individuals and communities. It is important to recognize that different individuals, especially in relation to potentially contentious topics such as Public Safety, will have different perspectives. When considering stakeholder feedback, We All Rise closely examines stakeholder positionality. It must be acknowledged that entrenched systems of oppression, negative experiences with and perceptions of policing, and marginalization severely impact BIPOC, disabled, women, and LGBTQ+ individuals' feelings of safety and security in public environments such as college campuses.

Outreach Limitations

Given these unprecedented times amidst a global pandemic, there are inherently limitations to this process as it is being conducted virtually. When conducting stakeholder outreach, a combination of virtual and in-person engagement is preferable to reach the greatest number of individuals. Access to computers and access to high speed internet, can preclude some neighbors from participating in virtual outreach events. While we attempted to correct for this limitation through the delivery of mailers in a half-mile radius around the campus, this does not constitute a solution to the problem. We also recognize that many people in our community are suffering from “Zoom fatigue.” Given that so many have been working and socializing online for over a year, there is hesitance to engage in further virtual exercises. Despite these limitations, engagement during this process was able to reach people from a diversity of ethnic and racial backgrounds, and age groups.

Stakeholder Engagement

The following data represents the number of participants in each form of engagement:



Focus Groups

The project team conducted two focus groups with community members internal and external to PCC. At both meetings, stakeholders were presented with the same information. At the Cascade Diversity Council meeting, stakeholders had the opportunity to provide feedback to the project team.

Information Presented at Humboldt Neighborhood Association and Cascade Diversity Council	Stakeholder Feedback at Cascade Diversity Council
Introduced the project and Public Safety’s role on campus.	Public Safety offices need to be inviting and promote a calming and positive atmosphere.
Gave an overview of Portland Community College’s approach to using Critical Race	Public Safety offices need to be easily identifiable on campus, well maintained,

Theory.	easily accessible, and prompt a supportive environment on campus.
Presented the matrix used for determining the feasibility of different locations for the new Public Safety offices.	Some attendees expressed their desire for Public Safety to remain on the margins of campus.
Encouraged to engage with the project via a survey, community forum, and small group conversations.	Requests for more details and a better explanation for the project team's selection of the PSB and PSEB.

Small Group Conversations

We All Rise offered the opportunity for stakeholders to engage directly with the project team on a group call. We All Rise held calls with two stakeholders on April 14 and May 3, 2021.

Stakeholders have mixed feelings about the relocation of the Public Safety Offices to the Public Services Education Building (PSEB), but ultimately prefer this location over the current site because it is a more visible location with programs that complement Public Safety.

Concerns and things to consider:

- It might be difficult for Public Safety vehicles to get in and out of the PSEB parking lot quickly given the cars parked on Michigan St. and Mississippi St. and students who often traverse the parking lot to get to and from their cars.
- The space already feels limited in the PSEB. The space proposed for Public Safety seems cramped.
- With the Sim Lab remodel, there is likely to be an increase in usage of the PSEB.
- Storage space is needed at PSEB for high-value virtual reality equipment currently stored in locked staff offices including charging stations.

- The paramedic program national exam is held in the PSEB and currently uses the entire building when it takes place.

Community Forum

The project team received a lot of excellent feedback from the forum. Stakeholders expressed a wide range of questions and concerns related to the ultimate location of the Public Safety offices, space constraints in the PSEB, Public Safety's collaboration with the Portland Police Bureau (PPB), and Public Safety at PCC. There was mixed support for both locations, but few stakeholders completely disapproved of either one and more stakeholders preferred the PSEB. The bulk of feedback was aimed at understanding what the impacts of moving Public Safety would be at the PSEB as well as redeveloping the current site.

Concerns and things to consider:

- There are accessibility concerns because the potential location for Public Safety at PSEB is small and tucked away in a corner of the building.
- The PSEB is already fairly crowded and is slated to be even more so with the inclusion of the Sim Lab.
- There are concerns related to the relocation of the Criminal Justice program at PCC Cascade. At the PSEB, there would be opportunities for the programs to collaborate, but there would need to be more targeted conversations to discuss potential impacts.
- There are concerns related to Public Safety's relationship with the PPB.

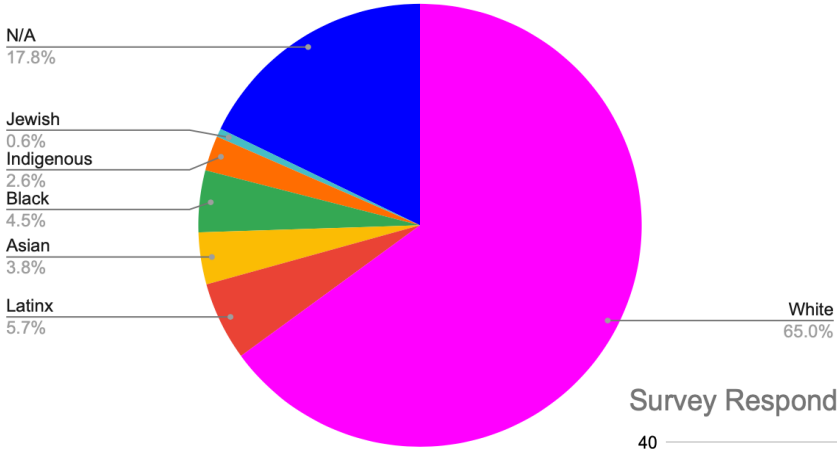
Survey

161 participants took a survey We All Rise and PCC developed to inform the selection of the final location for the Public Safety Offices as well as design elements of the finished building.

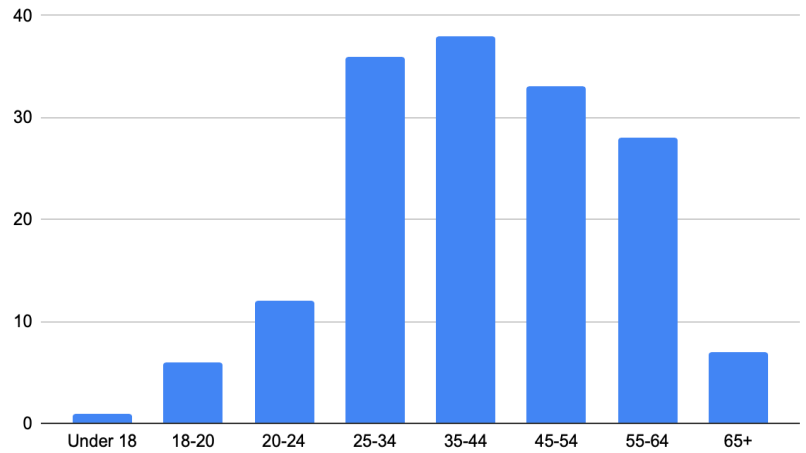
Demographics

Overall, 161 people responded to the survey. The following charts break down the survey by age, race/ethnicity, and gender.

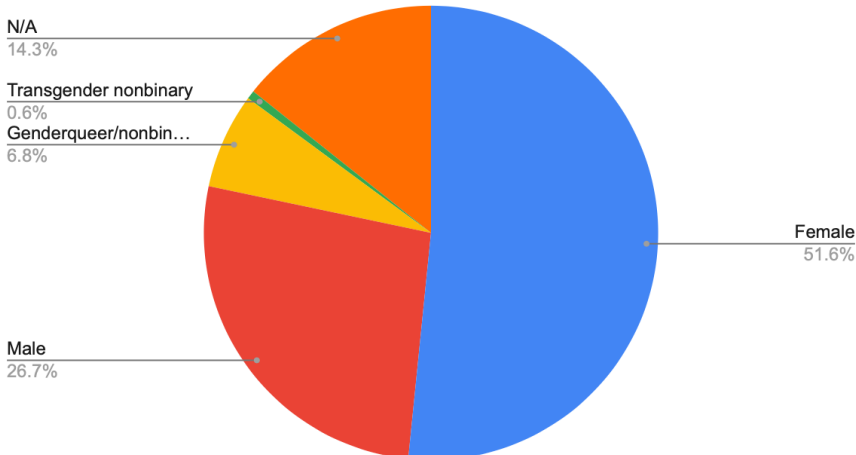
Survey Respondent Race/Ethnicity



Survey Respondent Age



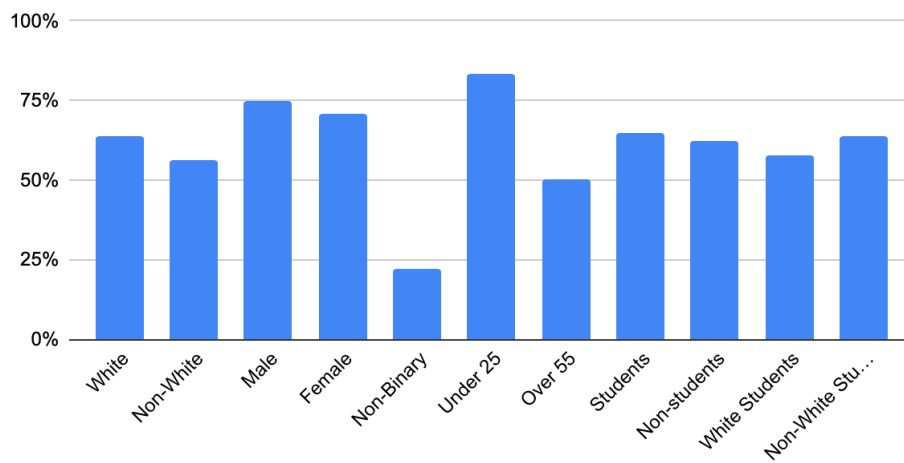
Survey Respondents by Gender



Comfort Contacting Public Safety

Overall, people at PCC feel comfortable reaching out to Public Safety. Around 64% of respondents indicated that they are comfortable while 36% indicated that they are not. There are discrepancies between different demographic groups, however.

Percentage (%) of Each Demographic Group Comfortable Contacting Public Safety



Non-white was used to describe all BIPOC respondents. There were too few individuals of color who responded to the survey to create more precise racial/ethnic categories.

The following categories were noteworthy for their responses:

- Non-white respondents indicated discomfort due to past experiences with police brutality, discomfort with security culture, and 3 respondents reported an experience being harassed by Public Safety.
- Non-binary respondents indicated discomfort due to negative experiences with the police and the fear of policing.
- Individuals under 25 exhibited the greatest comfort contacting Public Safety. There is no indication for why this result occurred. The youngest respondents did not provide written explanations.

Safe Learning Environment

What promotes a safe learning environment?
The provision of resources and support services on campus including food and shelter.
A welcoming and safe environment with representation in leadership proportional to the student body.
Anti-racism practices and non-gendered spaces.
Freedom from gun violence, secure campus buildings, good lighting, and accountability for crime.
Public Safety should be prompt and visible on campus.

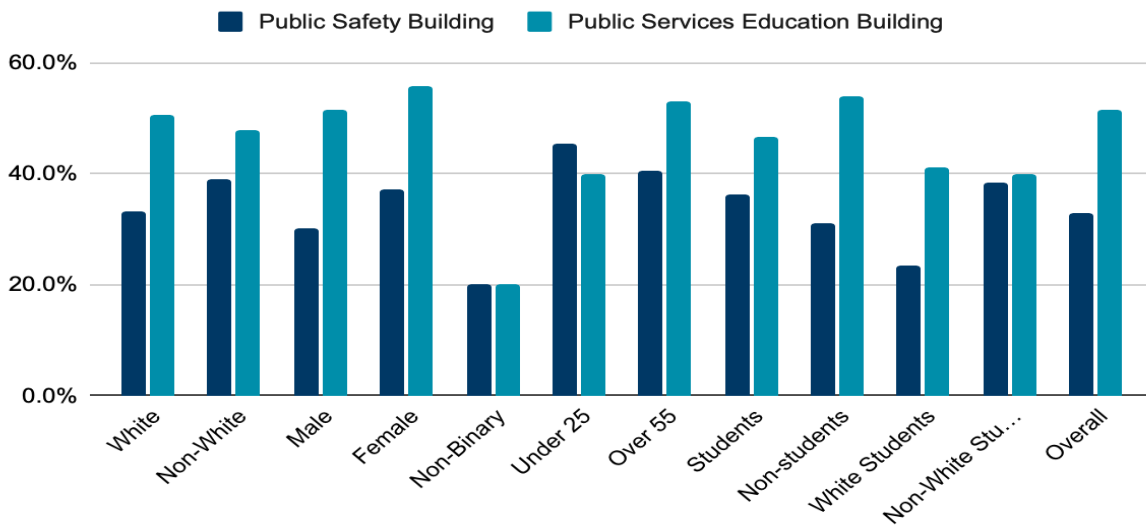
Six individuals noted that they are uncomfortable with policing and expressed discomfort with Public Safety's association with the Portland Police.

White individuals over 55 were more concerned with accessing Public Safety services, students were concerned with the availability of mental health services, food, and shelter, and women were concerned with lighting on campus and gun violence.

Location Preference

Overall, the PSEB was the preferred location for the new Public Safety Offices. Across the board, respondents preferred the PSEB with the exception of the respondents under 25.

Percentage (%) Support for Public Safety Location (PSB or PSEB)



Summary Findings

Overall, the Public Services Education Building (PSEB) is the preferred location for the new Public Safety offices indicated by this report. At each stage of engagement, the PSEB was the preferred location. Generally, stakeholder support for the PSEB was fairly consistent across demographic groups. That being said, support for the PSEB is not universal or without reservations.

	PSB	PSEB
Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The space has worked fine thus far, and there is no reason to make a change. • It allows for better integration with the surrounding community. • It's a better use of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It offers opportunities for synergies with other programs. • It is in a more visible and central location. • It will have a lesser impact on the Humboldt Neighborhood. • It is the preferred location of Public Safety officers.

	<p>space given that the PSEB is crowded and there is available real estate on the PSB site.</p>	
<p>Concerns</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● It is situated far away from the heart of campus. ● The location is not accessible or easy to find. ● Neighbors are concerned about increased traffic in their neighborhood. ● Neighbors are concerned about the construction of a new building and the potential for it to have a larger footprint than the current building. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● It is perceived as a cramped, overcrowded space. ● A few respondents preferred that Public Safety remain in a separate building . ● The criminal justice program would be impacted and many individuals would need to be relocated. ● It might be difficult for Public Safety vehicles to get in and out of the parking lot quickly because of how cars are parked on Michigan St. and Mississippi St. and students often traverse the parking lot to get to and from their cars. ● The PSEB may lose its student and faculty social space around the coffee machine. ● The space that would be occupied by Public Safety is relatively small, and there are few if any amenities.

Regardless of which location is chosen, there are a number of issues that need to be addressed.

- Many respondents indicated that neither location is centrally located. The PSEB's location does not represent a substantial improvement over the PSB.
- Individuals have very different conceptions of what constitutes a safe learning environment.
 - At least six individuals shared they are uncomfortable with policing on campus.
 - Older white individuals responded they are much more comfortable seeking out Public Safety or using Public Safety's services.
 - Around half of non-white and all but one non-binary respondent indicated discomfort contacting Public Safety due to negative experiences with the police.
- Engagement was not carried out with populations representative of PCC Cascade's demographic.

Next Steps

We All Rise recommends that the project team take the following steps in upcoming outreach:

- Collaborate with the existing programs in the PSEB to understand their space needs as part of further evaluation of the PSEB as a possible location for the new Public Safety offices.
- Update the community when a final location is chosen.
- Work with Public Safety to ensure that proposed locations and/or designs respond to their needs.
- Communicate and continue to emphasize campus safety as a central component of the planning process.

- Continue to engage the community on design principles. Thus far, the following principles have been recurrent:
 - Good lighting.
 - Clear signage/good visibility on campus.
 - A welcoming design that includes windows, and has space for students and other community members to sit and/or congregate.
 - Sufficient space to carry out private/confidential conversations.
 - The space should be designed to allow for quick evacuations and/or lockdowns in the event of gun violence.
- If the PSB is chosen, engage the neighborhood in the planning and design process. Likewise, if the PSEB is chosen, engage PSEB stakeholders in the planning and design process.
- Conduct outreach with more diverse community members on campus. This may include identity-based clubs, student organizations, faculty groups, and/or local community organizations.

Based on the project team's first round of outreach to the PCC community, it is anticipated that the following themes will continue to be important to stakeholders throughout the project:

- Understanding the role of the Portland Police on campus and how it contrasts with the role of Public Safety.
- Understanding the services that Public Safety provides for the PCC community.
- Contextualizing the bond measure to avoid public confusion over the use of funds.
- Mitigating and/or addressing some of the concerns that individuals from historically marginalized groups have with regards to policing.

Other themes that were heard during outreach include:

- The Public Safety uniforms, which are reminiscent of police uniforms, are unnerving for many community members. It may be useful for Public Safety to adopt a less authoritative appearance.
- Providing or encouraging further social justice and cultural competence programming to Public Safety officers and other campus staff and faculty.

Continued Outreach will ensure that PCC properly represents the community it serves in capital development projects. Construction projects have significant impacts on all PCC and community members including neighbors, and it is essential that every effort is made to reflect the diversity of voice at PCC especially when it comes to contentious topics like Public Safety and policing.