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HONOLULU POLICE DEPARTMENT · STRATEGIC PLANNING UNIT

Building a strategic plan from the ground up

How HPD built its 2026–2031 Strategic Plan, step by step



November 2026

Submitted by the Honolulu Police Department for Informational Briefing
Committee on Public Safety & Economy | November 18, 2026

DEPT. COM. 697(26)
PSE

“

It’s not my strategic plan.
It’s our strategic plan.



Chief David Lazar

The guiding principle behind how HPD built its strategic plan

Why build it from the ground up

15,236 officers

POLICE NATIONAL SURVEY

Across 88 police agencies, officers who felt treated fairly were more committed and satisfied. *Buy-in was likelier when leaders gave officers input.*

Rosenbaum & McCarty, 2017 · Policing: An International Journal

2,291 employees

ORGANIZATIONS IN CHANGE

In organizations going through major change, employees who felt they had a voice were more committed. Trust in senior leaders was part of why.

Farndale et al., 2011 · Human Resource Management

150+ agencies

PUBLIC SECTOR SURVEY

Strategic plans were more likely to be carried out when the managers who would carry them out helped build them.

Elbanna, Andrews & Pollanen, 2016 · Public Management Review

BOTTOM LINE **“When people feel heard, they commit.”**

How we built our plan



About two months from the first listening session to a finished draft in our partners' hands.

Who we heard from

ABOUT

175

people took part across six sessions, including about 160 HPD employees

Each group met in its own session, so people could speak openly with their peers.

Aug 6	**Community** Neighborhood board and City Council members
Aug 10–11	**Officers and Corporals**
Aug 12	**Professional Staff**
Aug 13	**Sergeants and Lieutenants**
Aug 14	**Command Staff** Majors and Captains
Sept 3–4	**Executive Staff** Chief, Deputy and Assistant Chiefs

The questions we asked

EMPLOYEE SESSIONS

01

PURPOSE

What brought you to HPD, and what makes you stay?

02

COMMUNICATION

What would improve how information is shared and communication happens across the department?

03

SYSTEMS & PROCESSES

What systems, processes, or practices get in the way of doing your job well, and what would you change?

04

LEADERSHIP & CULTURE

What do we need from our leaders and one another to create a department where people can do their best work, grow, feel supported, and be held accountable?

COMMUNITY SESSION

What is HPD doing well?

Where can HPD improve?

What suggestions do you have for HPD?

Setting up the room

Round tables
Each table worked as its own group for the whole session.

Sticky notes and black markers
Set out around every table so people could start writing right away.

One question on the screen
The whole room worked from the same question at the same time.

Wall space for the sheets
Each table's themes went up on the walls and stayed up all day.



Ask one question, then write silently

01

Each round starts with one open question, such as “What brought you to HPD, and what makes you stay?” Everyone writes answers first, one idea per sticky note, before any discussion.

HEARING EVERY VOICE Open discussion invites groupthink, and the loudest voices take over. Writing first lets everyone answer, including quiet people or those afraid to speak up.



Sort into themes, then present

02

Each table agrees on three themes from its sticky notes and groups its notes under them. Then each table presents its themes to the whole room. The rounds repeat for all four questions.

WHY IT MATTERS The people who wrote the notes decide the themes, not the facilitators, so the themes reflect how they see the problem.



Pareto Principle

DEFINITION *A few issues drive most of the results (the 80/20 rule).*

03

Each person got three red dots for the sticky notes or themes they felt would most improve the department. With only three, they chose carefully. The four areas with the most dots went to the Chief.

WHY IT WORKS Limited dots force a choice, so the room's real priorities rise to the top.



Present to the Chief

04

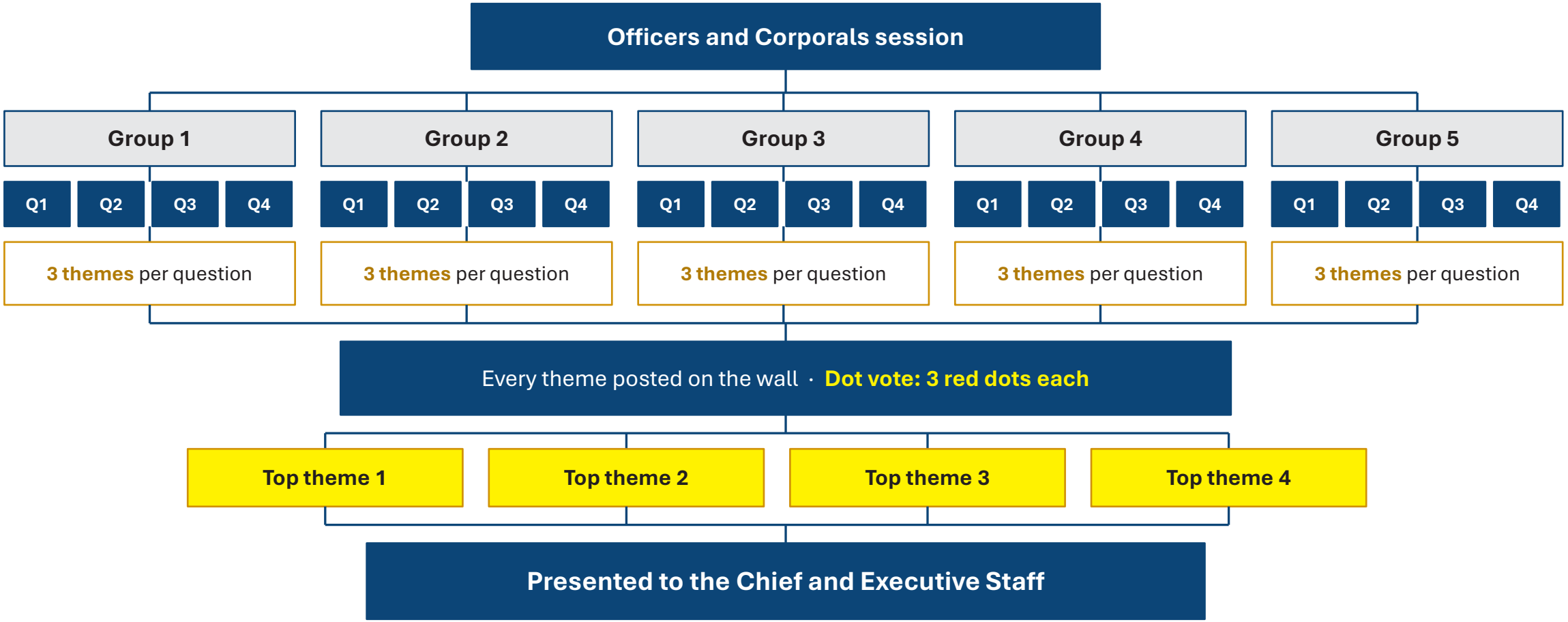
The dots were counted, and the four most important themes were identified. The room split into four groups, one per theme, to prepare a presentation for the Chief and executive staff.

THREE QUESTIONS What is the current state? What is the desired state? What is the gap between the two? Employees named the problems and the solutions to reach the desired state.



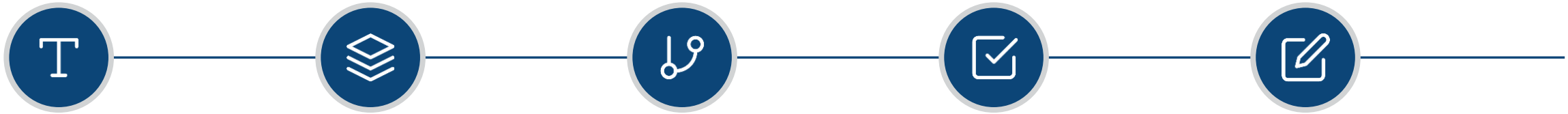
THE CHIEF LISTENED Only clarifying questions, with humility and openness.

Recap: how one session worked



Current state · Desired state · The gap

Turning sticky notes into one plan



01
Record
Every sticky note, theme, and red dot, word for word, the same day. Checked against the audio.

02
Sort
Responses sorted into themes for each session, then combined across sessions.

03
Draft
Themes organized into pillars, goals, objectives, and action items.

04
Review
Several rounds of review by our unit and command staff.

05
Refine
Executive staff feedback, measurable outcomes, and final edits.

A NOTE ON AI We used AI as a tool to help sort and organize a large volume of information. People made every decision.

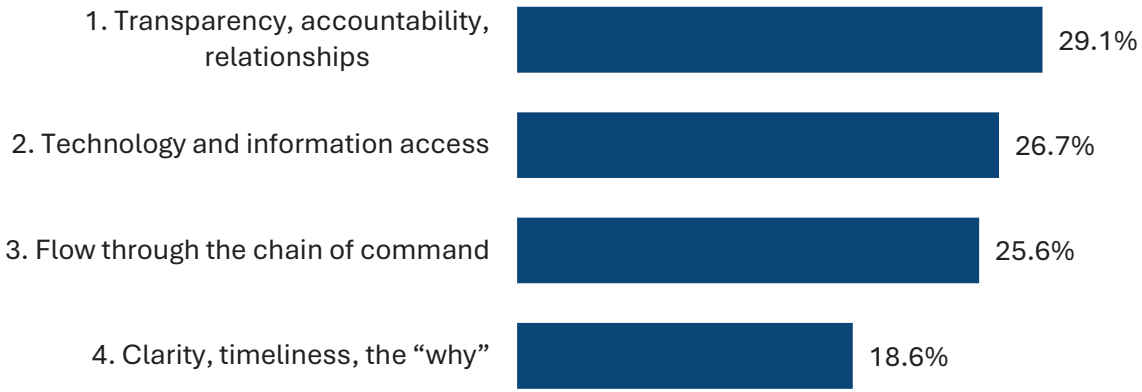
From sticky notes to one picture

Same-day record, word for word
After each session day at the Koʻolau Ballroom, every sticky note, theme, and red dot went into a Word document, organized by question.

Checked against the audio
Every session was audio recorded. The team compared the written record to the recording so nothing said was missed.

Coded, counted, and combined
AI helped tag and count themes, then lined up all five session reports to find the themes every group raised.

OFFICERS AND CORPORALS · COMMUNICATION
86 responses, coded by theme



EXAMPLE RESPONSES, WORD FOR WORD
“Transparency” “Give us the ‘why’ for change” “Updates in writing rather than word of mouth” “To/froms need to go! (move) online?”

Building the first draft

WHAT WENT IN

Every sticky note, word for word

Who attended each session, and their rank

WHAT WE ASKED AI TO DO

Organize the themes into pillars, goals, objectives, and action items, and tag every goal to the session that raised it.

7	32	126	290
PILLARS	GOALS	OBJECTIVES	ACTION ITEMS

Final plan totals. Measurable outcomes came later, after the executive staff session.

Reviewed and edited several times

FIRST
Strategic Planning Unit
Read every line and made the first edits

NEXT
Captain
Now Acting Major Sharie Souza

THEN
Major
Now Deputy Chief Parker Bode

WHAT WE CHECKED IN EVERY ROUND

- Every objective sits under the right goal
- Every action item sits under the right objective
- Every goal sits under the right pillar
- Nothing is repeated

UNION ON THE TEAM

The SHOPO president is part of our Strategic Planning Unit.

He was embedded from the first listening session through every drafting and editing phase. Collective bargaining issues came out of the plan, so everything left is something HPD can do legally and within the contract.

Executive staff session

Most of the plan was drafted
Executive staff reacted to a real draft, not a blank page.

They set priorities
They helped shape what the plan should tackle first.

They found problems
Their feedback showed the plan needed a way to measure success.

WHAT CAME OUT OF IT

Priorities for the plan and measurable outcomes with timelines they helped shape.

About two weeks later, on September 17, executive staff wrote the vision, mission, and values.

Building measurable outcomes

FROM X
Where we are today

TO Y
Where we want to be

BY WHEN
A month and year

THE RULES

Tied to an objective Each outcome measures what a specific objective will produce.

A clear finish line A number, a percentage, or done / not done. No "improve."

Owned by a bureau Objectives are assigned to bureaus, so every outcome has an owner.

EXAMPLE FROM OUR PLAN

FROM	Our current median time from application to final offer
TO	**Under 90 days**
BY	**December 2027**

150 outcomes aligned to the plan's 126 objectives, with timelines shaped by executive staff, due December 2026 through June 2030

Tracing voices through the plan

WHAT WE HEARD	OBJECTIVE	ACTION ITEM	MEASURABLE OUTCOME
OFFICERS AND CORPORALS *"To/froms need to go! (move) online?"*	Deploy an electronic To/From system with routing visibility.	Pilot the electronic To/From in one bureau before department-wide rollout.	**Launch the electronic To/From system and retire the hardcopy To/From by September 2027.**
PROFESSIONAL STAFF *New majors rotate in and staff end up teaching them the job.*	Build a documented succession plan for each division.	Require commanders to review and update their succession plan every year.	**100% of divisions hold a documented succession plan, reviewed each year, by June 2028.**
PROFESSIONAL STAFF *Give us the same chance to transfer between divisions that sworn employees have.*	Establish career progression within professional staff classifications.	Create an internal lateral transfer process for professional staff to mirror the sworn process.	**Career progression steps, including internal lateral transfer, for all professional staff classifications by June 2030.**

Comments from the sessions became department-wide standards with deadlines.

Who we are came from what we heard

Most agencies write their vision, mission, and values first. We wrote ours on September 17, after the listening sessions, from what members and the community told us.

MISSION

We lead and protect with the aloha spirit so that our members and the community feel safe, respected, valued, and supported.

VISION

Serving with aloha, we care for our people and their ʻohana, strengthen community partnerships, and advance innovation and excellence in policing to create a safer Oʻahu.

Kuleana
Responsibility we carry and honor.

Lōkahi
Unity and harmony as one department.

Mālama
Caring for and protecting our island and each other.

ʻImua
Moving forward with purpose and courage.

YOU CAN HEAR THE SESSIONS IN IT

“Valued and supported”

Officers asked for leaders who support them and have their backs.

ʻImua: “purpose and courage”

Purpose was a top reason people stay, and courage drew 13 votes in the officers’ priority vote.

From draft to department



Department review
Draft posted on the HPD Intranet for every member to comment.

Partners · Oct 2
The Police Commission, the Mayor and his office, the City Council, and CALEA. Also made available to the community and community organizations.

Final edits
Final changes based on partner feedback.

Assign ownership
Objectives are assigned to bureaus. A goal can span more than one bureau.

Roll out and report
Briefings for every division, and regular progress updates to everyone.

STRATEGIC PLANNING UNIT Tracks every project, works with commanders on timelines, and reports progress back to the people who built the plan.

Many eyes on the plan

INSIDE HPD

Officers

Draft posted on the HPD Intranet for every member to comment.

CITY AND OVERSIGHT

Police Commission

City Council

Mayor's Office

ACCREDITATION

CALEA

COMMUNITY AND CULTURE

Community members

We Are Oceania

Hawaiian cultural review

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

Posted on HPD's website for two weeks. Community members were invited to email SPU directly.

Know in seconds if we're on track

The daily work never stops. A tracking system and regular check-ins keep the plan from getting buried.

Assign
Every objective is assigned to a bureau, so every outcome has an owner.

Check in regularly
Did we do what we committed to? Are outcomes moving? What's next?

See it in seconds
A dashboard shows leaders at a glance whether we are winning or losing.

FY2027 SCORECARD July 2026 – June 2027 **SAMPLE**

5 ✓ On track	2 ! At risk	1 ✕ Off track

OUTCOMES DUE THIS FISCAL YEAR	DUE
✓ Vision and mission shared with 100% of employees	Dec 2026
✓ Drone as First Responder launched	Dec 2026
! Cultural Alignment Unit established	Jan 2027
✓ First annual legislative agenda published	Jan 2027
✓ Quarterly strategic plan reviews begin	Mar 2027
✕ Outside interview panels for all promotions	Mar 2027
! Academy capacity assessment complete	Jun 2027
✓ First department-wide employee survey	Jun 2027

Real outcomes from our plan. Statuses are illustrative, not live data.



IN THE SPIRIT OF ALOHA

Mahalo

Questions?

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