Planning in Advance of Potential Community Unrest

An example: **Mission/Focus Statement**

The aim is to make the metropolitan region more resilient by advancing efforts to:

- Convene community stakeholders to understand deep community concerns
- Build trust among residents and between leaders and residents
- Identify/design processes to assess, implement plans, and institute accountability with respect to constituency group concerns
- Prepare the community to respond in resourceful and coordinated ways if an event occurs that challenges trust
- Develop shared plans for acting in the midst of community unrest.

The Bridge Initiative is part of The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law’s Divided Community Project
https://go.osu.edu/dcpbridge.

To contact the Bridge Initiative, contact Thomas Battles, tbattles38@yahoo.com or 678.993.9293.

Other organizations that might offer assistance:

- U.S. Department of Justice Community Relations Service, justice.gov/crs, askers@usdoj.gov, 202.305.2935
- Local community mediation Programs
- State or city civil rights commissions
- International City/County Management Association, icma.org

*Thanks to the Greater Columbus Community Trust, which drafted a similar statement and uses a similar organizational model.*
Steps for Organizing

1. Form a Convening Group
   - Identify a small group of trusted leaders from across different communities.
   - Convene these leaders as a community planning group.

2. Get Public Input
   - Hold conversations with organizational representatives
   - Interview additional community leaders and members of the public

3. Form a Group to Set the Agenda
   - Conveners and additional representatives review community input
   - Identify task forces, task force leaders, and timeline

4. Create and Engage Task Forces

Deliverables
1. Ensuring community preparedness
2. Enhancing community resilience

Examples of Task Forces and their Objectives

- **Readiness**
  - Assess readiness for community unrest
  - Prepare for community unrest
  - Assign roles for community leaders
  - Develop communication approaches & key protocols

- **Future Concerns**
  - Identify potential future conflicts & address underlying concerns through assessment, implementation of plans, & accountability
  - Improve and institutionalize methods for learning about residents’ concerns

- **Community Resilience**
  - Bridge community divisions
  - Improve cross-community relationships
  - Determine whether and how to improve current processes

- **Youth & Education**
  - Ensure youth concerns are heard
  - Involve young people, perhaps through social media

- **Communications**
  - Engage residents through online communication tools
  - Reach out to each part of the community