

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Local leaders facing the immediate aftermath of a divisive incident should consider helping their staffs to take the following seven steps roughly simultaneously, all discussed in more detail in this document:

- ✿ **Consult with community leaders** who are community bridge builders or have a stake in the conflict to listen to their concerns. Seek their help in constructive communication and problem solving before you make decisions about next steps. **Let the public know** about the consultations. **Keep these leaders informed** on an ongoing basis.
- ✿ **Develop a protocol** between the mayor and law enforcement and **let the public know** that the mayor and law enforcement are working together on a constructive response. Keep city/county department directors in the communication loop.
- ✿ **Seek counsel** concerning what other leaders have found helpful in analogous situations from organizations such as those listed on the reverse side of this card.
- ✿ **Frame the matter** (“What we are facing together is...”) **to include the longer-term underlying issues as well as immediate concerns**. The aim is to demonstrate your understanding of the depth and breadth of issues and to help the public understand the perspective of their fellow residents.
- ✿ **Acknowledge the pain** that may fall unevenly on residents but that it is the shared hope of all to deal with the hurt of any. Take time to acknowledge that city/county staff may be feeling the pain as well.
- ✿ **Lay the groundwork** for more discussion/deliberation regarding both the immediate and underlying concerns, and commit publicly to these plans.
- ✿ **Use communication** approaches and other means to reach and be trusted by each pertinent group within the community, city/county staff, social media influencers, and external audiences. Monitor social media and counter misinformation. Move quickly to reflect the urgency felt by the public.
- ✿ **Offer safe avenues** for residents and staff to express their views and emotions.

Once the immediate crisis has passed, local leaders should consider longer-term strategies for addressing the underlying causes of the conflict:

- ✿ **Work with stakeholders** to develop solutions to both longer-term problems and immediate concerns and to implement them.
- ✿ **Let the public know** how issues are being addressed through regular reports. Keep residents engaged in addressing the issues.