

SANTA CLARA COUNTY COMMUNITY SUMMIT ON FIREARMS & SAFETY

VISION

Bring many departments of the County and diverse members of the community together for a summit on firearms & safety.

“Bringing the community together is the only way to open up the dialogue and move forward from our polarized views on this issue. This summit should be broad-based both in its design and participation.”

- Dave Cortese, Supervisor, Santa Clara County

OBJECTIVES

- Increase shared understanding of Firearms and Safety in Santa Clara County
- Create time and space for residents to connect, listen, share, engage, and act
- Identify opportunities for future action
- Define next steps and available resources for community engagement - Call to action

DESIRED OUTCOMES

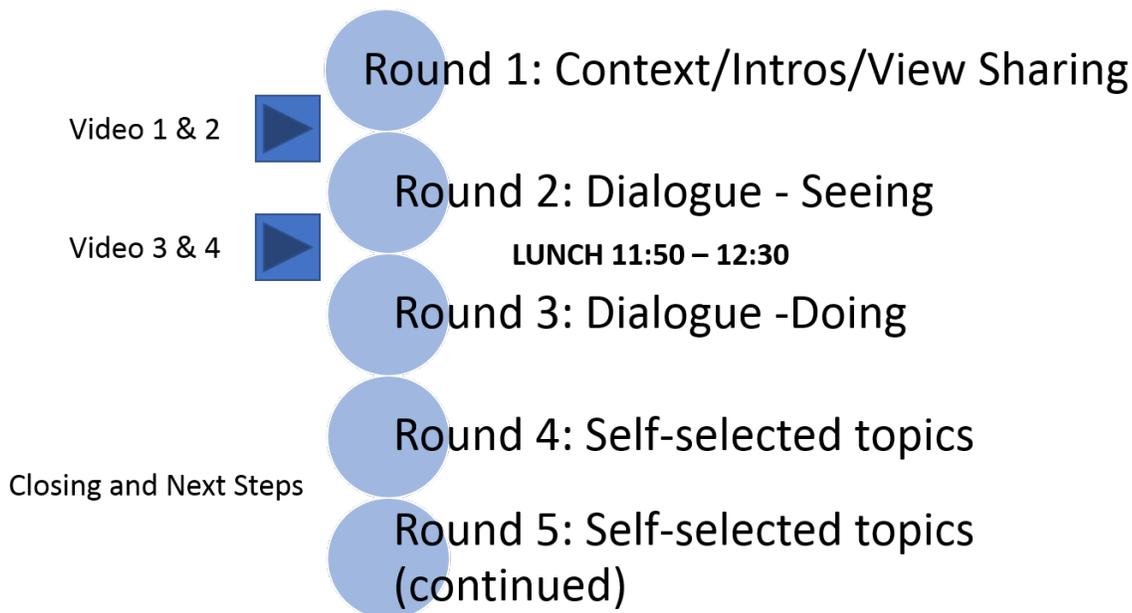
- At the end of the Summit, people will say they were able to talk about challenging issues – including across differences, understand each other and their neighbors, and find some pathways toward workable solutions.
- People will leave the summit with more hope and a sense of possibility that we can come together across differences.
- The process will allow residents to showcase their current activities and generate or support new ones.
- The process will inform community leaders and generate recommendations for new policies and legislation at all levels of society.
- The process will become a model for future dialogue and action in Santa Clara County and throughout the U.S.

SANTA CLARA COUNTY COMMUNITY SUMMIT ON FIREARMS & SAFETY

SCHEDULE

9:00 – 9:55	Round 1: Overview, Ground rules, and Sharing views on firearms and safety
9:55 – 10:00	Supervisor Cortese Welcome
10:00 – 10:15	Video 1: Student Voices
10:15 – 10:30	Video 2: County: What We Are Seeing
10:30 – 11:20	Round 2: Dialogue - How do we see the issues?
11:20 – 11:30	Individual Input Process to Summit report
11:30 – 11:45	Video 3: County - What We Are Doing
11:50 – 12:30	Lunch
12:30 – 12:45	Video 4: Elected Officials - Seeing & Doing
12:45 – 1:35	Round 3: Dialogue - What can we/should we do?
1:35 – 1:45	Individual Input Process to Summit report
1:45 – 2:45	Round 4: Self-selected topics – focused conversations and action plans
2:45 – 3:00	Thank you & Next Steps
3:00 – 4:00	<i>Optional Round 5: Continued for people who want extra time</i>

Graphic View of Schedule



How to Have a Dialogue

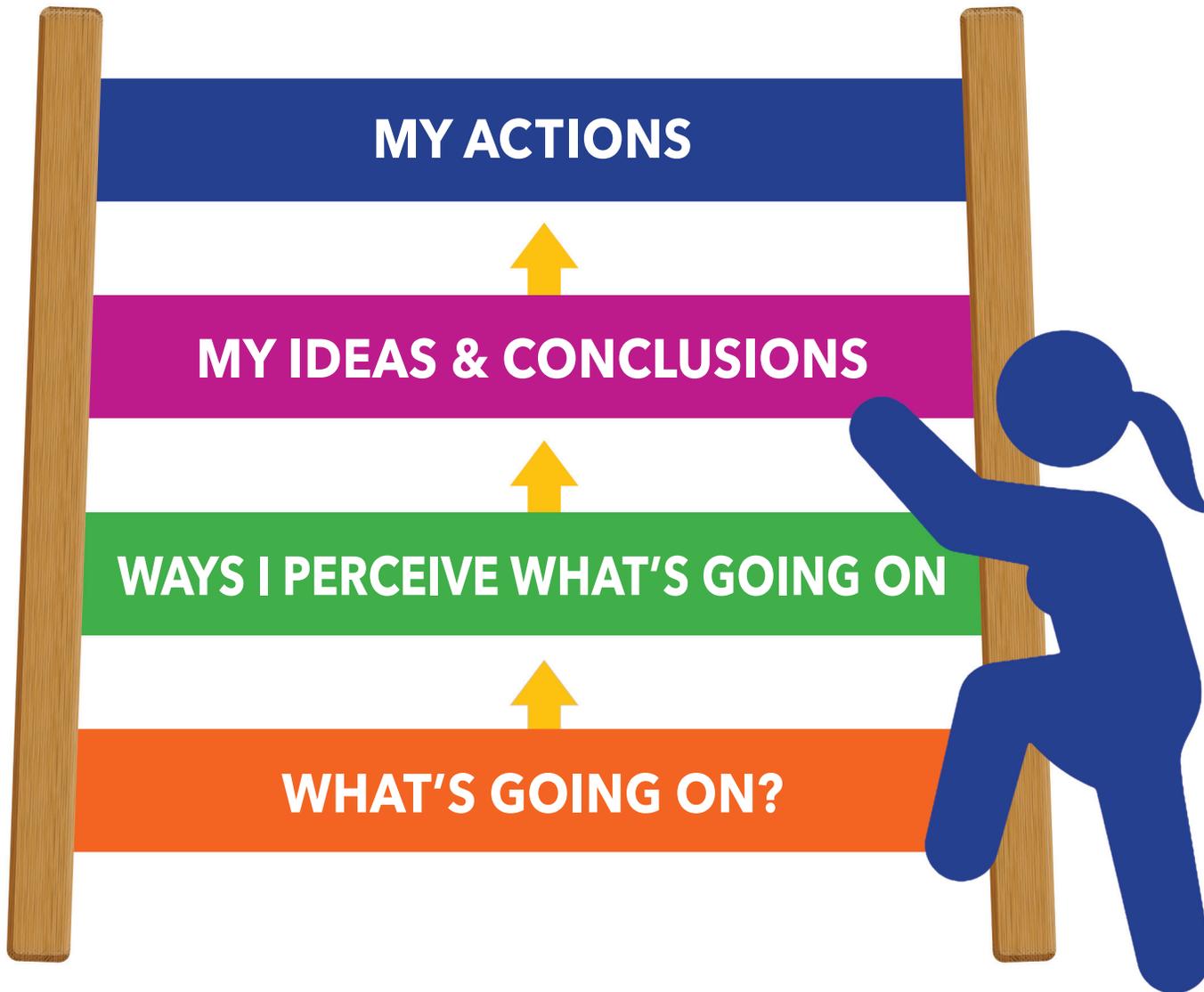
Disagreements generate the best solutions...if everybody listens.

It takes different points of views, formed by different values, beliefs, and experiences, to address challenging community issues. Many of us spend most of our time with people who share similar views. We don't get much practice interacting with people who think much differently than we do. Here, we offer a few tips to help you have conversations across difference.

1. **Agree not to try to change each other's minds.** We are here to learn from each other. Decisions, policies, laws, and community efforts become better when we know how these solutions impact different people.
2. **Start by connecting at a human level.** We are all residents who care about our community. We are mothers, fathers, children, sisters, and brothers. We care about society enough to devote a Saturday to dialogue with others. We might discover that we share hobbies, interests, and experiences. It is okay to like somebody who doesn't agree with each of your views.
3. **Take turns talking and make room to hear from everybody.** Facilitators will interrupt people if necessary to include all voices in the conversation.
4. **Move beyond arguments about "facts."** Let people know what information you trust that helps form your opinions. Ask about the data that supports others' views. People can look for themselves and decide if they can learn something from new information sources.
5. **Take three breaths.** Many people come to this conversation with strong feelings that can be overwhelming. You will be able to think, talk and listen better if you intentionally relax from time to time.
6. **It is okay to talk about your pain, frustration, sadness, or anger about a personal experience.** Honest stories about your experience help people understand how you have come to your views.
7. **Be respectful.** Personal attacks and unfair generalizations ruin any possibility of learning something new.
8. **Be gracious.** Let's be real. This topic raises strong emotions and beliefs. A single word or phrase can cause another person to jump to judgments and assumptions about you. Someone will likely say something that causes you to bristle. That's just the way it is. Then we have a choice....
9. **Stay in it.** When stuck or provoked, do we stop listening and learning, or do we stay in the conversation and talk some more about how and why we see things differently?
10. **Expect action.** This is not just talk. We don't expect to solve every issue, but we do expect to become smarter about the opportunities and obstacles before us. And, by coming together as concerned residents and sharing our differing points of view, we will contribute to tangible actions across the county.

The Listening Ladder

The ladder allows us to slow down and take stock of how we're listening, of the feelings and thoughts that we form based on what we perceive, and of how those perceptions shape our realities.



*How does
"my story"
influence the
ladder?*

The Listening Ladder Explained

We become better listeners when we understand our path up and down the Listening Ladder. Use this tool to consider how you take in information, how you perceive the world, how you form ideas and make conclusions, and how you respond with actions based upon your ideas and conclusions. The tool also helps you to ask questions of others to understand how they landed on their views. Here is a simple example:

Scenario One: Someone comments on leash laws for dogs.	Scenario Two: Someone comments on leash laws for dogs.
<p>What's going on?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Person 1: Says, "Dogs are a menace."• Person 2: Rolls their eyes. <p>Ways I perceive what's going on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Person 1: Dogs can be very dangerous.• Person 2: Dogs bring joy to the world. <p>My ideas and conclusions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Person 1: Internal dialogue - "Person 2 is disrespectful."• Person 2: Internal dialogue - "Oh, no. Person 1 is another dog-hater." <p>My Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Person 1: Stops listening to person 2 and learns nothing new.• Person 2: Stops listening to person 1 and learns nothing new.	<p>What's going on?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Person 1: Says, "Dogs are a menace."• Person 2: Says, "I only have positive views on dogs. Help me understand how you have come to view all dogs as a menace." <p>Ways I perceive what's going on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Person 1: Dogs can be very dangerous.• Person 2: Dogs bring joy to the world. <p>My ideas and conclusions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Person 1: Internal dialogue - "Hmmm, not all dogs – maybe I should clarify my statement."• Person 2: Internal dialogue - "I imagine person 1 has had some bad experiences with dogs." <p>My Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Person 1: Clarifies their statement and talks about their experience with a dangerous dog.• Person 2: Feels empathy for Person 1's story and learns more about why some people might want to enforce more leash laws.

We create stories of how the world works based on our life experiences. If I was attacked by a dog as a child, my story might focus on the problem of dogs. If I grew up with friendly dogs, my story might be about the good that dogs bring to the world. Our goal is to understand the stories that influence what we notice, our perceptions, our ideas and conclusions, and our resulting actions.

In high-quality dialogue, we watch ourselves, through self-reflection, racing up and down the ladder. When we move between the rungs of the ladder mindlessly, we treat our conclusions as "facts" and our actions as the only rational option. When we slow down a bit, press the "pause button," and listen to ourselves and others, we see how others might draw very different conclusions, and how they might take very different actions - even when the circumstances are the same.

As we begin to explore our views on firearms and safety, we invite you to reflect on how your views and actions have been shaped so others can learn from you.

My Input

(comments, ideas, requests, questions)

Please submit your comments, ideas, requests, and questions to be incorporated in the follow-on report

Topic:

My views: Include primary values, beliefs, experiences, and data that inform your view

My View

VALUES

BELIEFS

EXPERIENCES

DATA

My comments, ideas, requests, questions:

My Input

(comments, ideas, requests, questions)

Please submit your comments, ideas, requests, and questions to be incorporated in the follow-on Report

Topic:

Suicide by firearm

EXAMPLE

My views: Include primary values, beliefs, experiences, and data that inform your view

My View

VALU
BELIE
EXPEI
DATA

- I was not aware suicides by firearm were so common.
- The data on suicides in the county was very informative.
- I have a few family members who suffer from depression and they own guns – this scares me.
- It doesn't seem like we devote enough resources to support people who suffer from depression. This is a belief – not sure what data supports my belief.

My comments, ideas, requests, questions:

1. I suggest a social media campaign to educate the public on the nature of the problem. When more people understand the problem, we might find some good solutions.
2. Study communities with very few suicides by firearms – learn what they are doing.

Self-Selected Dialogue and Action (Rounds 4 & 5)

From 1:45 to 2:45 and from 3:00 to 4:00, you can dig deeper into a specific issue. Anybody can convene a conversation. If at least one other person joins the topic, then you have a group. These self-selected dialogue and action rounds can be incredibly productive. It might look messy, but if people follow their interests, concerns, and passions, we will make significant progress.

You won't have a designated facilitator, but you will have one or two people who convene the conversation. Let them lead. Help them be successful. If the group isn't working for you, move on or start another group.

Just like earlier rounds, we ask that you allow time to complete Input Forms to submit for the follow-on report.

Individual Guidelines

- Participate fully – contribute your voice
- Continue to follow dialogue ground rules
- Continue to use the Listening Ladder
- Take risks – be open to experimentation, innovation and surprise
- Take care of yourself and your needs

Finding Direction (What group should I join or propose?)

- Your passion (what you care about most) should guide you
- Be prepared to be surprised

Law of Locomotion (What if I get in a group that I don't like?)

- If you are no longer learning or contributing, move to another group
- Cross-pollination is encouraged

Principles (What should I expect from my group?)

- Whoever comes... these are the right people
- Whatever happens is the only thing that could have
- Wherever it is, is the right place
- Whenever it starts is the right time
- When it is over, it is over

Find more information about this design that is derived from [Open Space Technology \(OST\)](#), [Open Space Online](#), and [Wikipedia](#).

The Role of Convener

If you're passionate about a topic, you can wait to see if someone convenes a group on that topic – or, you can convene a group yourself. The summit facilitators will describe the process and timing for you to share your proposed topic with the large group.

You might be nervous, and ... that's fine! The process of convening is simple, you'll have your group to support you, and professional facilitators and other staff will circulate, and support conveners as needed.

As a convener, your major responsibilities are to:

- **Propose** a topic
- **Consider teaming** with another convener if you have the same or similar topics
- **Convene** the discussion, welcoming the participants, kicking off the conversation, and inviting participants to contribute to the discussion – while also feeling free to contribute your ideas
- **Make choices about the direction** of your group, using the “Self-Directed Dialogue and Action Template” below as a guide, if it's helpful
- **Ensure** that the results of the discussion are captured and recorded so they can become part of the proceedings

Being a convener does not mean:

- That you get to lecture to other group members about the topic
- That you have “all the answers”

Remember:

- It's OK to discuss the same (or similar) topic in more than one session.
- If no participants choose to attend your session, you may decide to participate in another session, or use the time for personal reflection about the topic. Your solutions may end up becoming top priorities.
- It's OK if participants leave your session or join it. They're just following the Law of Locomotion.

These convener guidelines are informed by material at OpenSpaceAgility.com, and the Wikipedia entry for Open Space.

Self-Directed Dialogue and Action Template

Use this template to make conscious choices about elements you might cover in your group. These are just suggestions. You can use all, some, or none. Use flip charts and take pictures to capture your work.

- Contact Information:** List your names and emails (to facilitate staying in touch with each other to continue this work):

Name	Email address

- Issue/Concern**

List the issue or concern about which you are meeting as a breakout group.

- Goal(s)**

Generate a list of goal(s) that you would like to achieve with respect to your issue/concern. Note that your goal(s) can be dialogue-oriented, action-oriented, or both.

- Other networks:** Who else needs to be involved in this, and how?

5.

- Barriers & Helpers**

List Barriers (things getting in the way of achieving your goal(s)).

List Helpers (things that can help to achieve your goal(s)).

Barriers	Helpers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •

- Support**

List any kind of support you would need to achieve your goal(s).

- Action Plan**

Identify what needs to be done, who will do it, and by when they/she/he will complete it.

What	Who	By when

Dialogue Action Guide

So what? We talk for a day about firearms and safety. What's the point?

In a time of increasing diversity and complexity, communities are struggling to solve problems. And, the places for creative problem-solving are few. The comment sections on social media and our partisan news sources only divide us further. It is time to come together, recognize our shared humanity, listen to each other, and ask questions to truly understand our differing values, beliefs, and experiences so that we might find some solutions that work.

For 30 years, our Summit design and facilitation partner, the American Leadership Forum – Silicon Valley (ALF), has been experimenting with approaches to create the kind of groundbreaking change we want for our communities. ALF has discovered there is no single answer, but successful efforts do share some common elements:

1. They include a broad spectrum of diverse community members, and they don't leave any groups of people out.
2. They continuously work on positive relationship building between people who live in "different worlds."
3. They include stakeholders from the beginning to end in the design processes.
4. They practice dialogue (high-quality conversation).
5. They facilitate resource exchanges to help people access the necessary tools to make a difference.
6. They continuously improve the process by identifying successes and missteps.
7. They don't give up – they recognize the messy nature of complex community challenges and when things go wrong they begin again by rebuilding relationships and getting back to work.

No complex community challenge will be solved perfectly. The Santa Clara County Community Summit on Guns and Safety has been fast-tracked to respond to the conversations occurring throughout our county and across the nation. We are working against time while attempting to implement an inclusive and workable process leading up to the summit, during the summit, and after the summit. Here's what we have been doing.

Include broad spectrum of diverse stakeholders

We continue to expand the list of individuals and groups to share the vision and agenda and collect input on the design of the summit process. We keep asking if we are leaving anybody out.

Continuously work on positive relationship building

If you see people solely as their political, ethnic, professional or other affiliations, you will miss our common thread: our humanity. We are building relationships between people who disagree. A network of caring relationships is the foundation to this complex community work.

Include stakeholders in the design processes from the beginning to the end

Thousands of conversations have informed the design and implementation of the Summit. We know there is room for improvement in the current summit process. And, we continue to reach out to residents to collect their input and adapt the process in response to the resulting conversations.

In a perfect world, we would see more engagement from diverse groups in the overall design and implementation of the summit. We hope to get better at engaging the community earlier and more often for future processes.

They practice dialogue (high-quality conversation)

Our differences can cause conflict, but our differences can also force us to be creative. Talking with people who have very different values and opinions is a skill that must be practiced. It is easy to blame, dismiss and disparage others. It is much harder to listen to someone, ask questions for deeper understanding, seriously consider their worldviews, and learn something new from them. If we stay in relationship with each other and continue to explore possibilities, we will find workable solutions.

Facilitate resource exchanges to help people access the necessary tools to make a difference

The solutions to complex community challenges involve many activities by many different groups. We have deliberately designed the summit website so that others can use the information to host similar conversations throughout the county – in living rooms, coffee shops, faith centers, workplaces, etc. This is just one resource to help us work on the issues. We also want to facilitate the connections between people who need certain resources (funding, tools, expertise, volunteers, data, etc.) and the people who might be able to provide those resources.

Continuously improve the process by identifying successes and missteps

Feedback is welcome! Help improve this process and future processes. We know we will get some things wrong. Let's do it better the next time.

Don't give up

The worst thing we can do is retreat to our "bubbles" and stop trying to connect with and learn from our neighbors. Complex community challenges are created over long periods of time. A day of conversation will not solve everything, but we can begin to unravel the issues, test some creative ideas, and start acting to create a safer and healthier Santa Clara County.