

**Southold Town Public Safety Task Force
Five Community Representatives' Recommendations
Aligning Identified Problems with Policy Responses**

**Executive Summary
Revised Post 5th Meeting
(with attached elaborated recommendations)**

Submitted by: Lily Dougherty-Johnson, Kristie Lutz, Carolyn Peabody, Magda Rodriguez, and Sonia Spar

Submitted June 9, 2026.

Executive Summary

This executive summary highlights the key points elaborated in full in the attached document entitled "*Southold Town Public Safety Task Force Five Community Representatives' Recommendations Aligning Identified Problems with Policy Responses.*"

- 1. It is our recommendation that Southold Town adopt the proposed legislation to ensure public safety amid new and unprecedented challenges affecting our community.**

We strongly recommend legislation to achieve these ends. Anything short of legislation denies the public's clear awareness of the Town's official policy and the ability to hold the Town accountable to ensure the enactment of the legislation's tenets.

During the four Task Force meetings, nothing was presented to us that would lead us to conclude that the Town of Southold cannot or should not adopt the draft legislation tailored to the specific conditions of Southold Town. Additionally, the presentation and discussion of specific Southold Town Police public safety policies dovetail with points outlined in the OLA law, which further indicate that adopting the OLA law should cause no hardship to the town.

Indeed, East Hampton Town has already adopted a locally tailored version of the law based upon the proposed legislative template, including provisions that extend beyond the fundamental elements of the original proposal. This provides a clear East End example that adoption and implementation are both practical and achievable for Southold Town.

2. Identified Problems & Recommended Additional Actions:

a. Identified Problems

- Immigration enforcement agents proceed at high speed on small residential streets, block people from going to work and school, and disrupt normal business.
- Vehicles often are civilian and unmarked, with completely blacked-out windows, and agents often wear masks and do not display identification or show a warrant, so it's unclear if they are official agents or impostors.
- Agents racially profile people and, nationally, have violated the Constitution, and have assaulted and killed nonviolent observers and detainees.
- People often do not go to school or work out of fear, and some businesses close because employees do not show up; this adversely affects the local economy and community.
- Public trust is eroding, and people may be afraid to call 911 in an emergency, hesitant to report crime, or reluctant to get critical medical care
- If STPD is on scene during immigration enforcement, they can be seen to be colluding with these agents, and it could endanger STPD officers (raised by STPD members)

b. Recommended Additional Actions

- **Communication**: We recommend that STPD **Report** any verified ICE/HSS actions to the Town Supervisor and Village Mayor (who then alert their Boards, and School and Hospital administrations), **Statement(s)** by the Town and/or Police shall be issued letting the public know what solutions they are implementing and relevant current policies, the creation of an informational **Video** with the purpose of showing the public what to look for to clearly identify STPD officers, employees, and vehicles, in both English and Spanish, sponsoring **Workshops/meetings/videos** to ensure people know how to differentiate between a local officer and other types of agents and the different laws they enforce, as well as providing information on laws to which bystanders and protesters must adhere, and **Coordination with schools, hospitals, and clinics** to ascertain their planned protocols for emergency response to immigration enforcement attempts

to enter their premises and make the community aware of the status of the preparedness our Town's significant institutions.

- **Additional Police/training:** including hiring additional police officers, additional de-escalation training, and reassignment of more officers to Greenport, where immigration enforcement actions have occurred and are likely to occur again.
- **Policy/legislation:** Consistent with new New York State legislation, No civil immigration detention in town facilities, and limiting access to License plate recognition technology data to authorized personnel and formal review of Southold Town's position on non-Town access to data from County-provided cameras.

3. Task Force Assessment:

Greater structure, including formal minutes and clearly articulated agendas and procedures, would have helped advance the core goals of the Task Force by documenting positions on key issues and proposed solutions, and by strengthening the ability to move, meeting to meeting, from discussion to solution development in response to the emerging and unprecedented public safety challenges that brought the Town Board to establish this Task Force. Opportunities for collaborative problem-solving were minimal. This was consistent with what we identified as the reliance on existing policy frameworks that, while relevant in certain respects, did not adequately address the scope and complexity of current public safety concerns brought to the Town Board by the community at large, thereby limiting the Task Force's ability to work together on new or adapted solutions. These limitations were reinforced by unclear membership, roles, and voting procedures, as well as the absence of structured discovery and expert consultation, which together reduced transparency and constrained fully informed, collaborative decision-making.

Despite the lack of progress and consensus about the problem and the legitimacy of the need for a serious response to the problem, the five members who present our recommendations do so having discussed the community's concerns and researched the elements of the proposed legislation with particular attention to the objections raised by other members of the Task Force. Our attached document incorporates the results of these efforts.

As a result, five members of the task force are submitting and standing behind this document as a reflection of our shared discussions, research, findings, and perspectives.

In conclusion, we recommend that the Town of Southold adopt its version of the OLA law as legislation, keeping the key tenets central. Our elaborated recommendations are attached.

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Purpose and Foundation

This framework establishes recommendations to guide the Town of Southold in addressing public safety concerns related to federal immigration enforcement activities. Based on the Framework issued by the Southold Town Board that established this Public Safety Task Force, these recommendations are grounded in

- The Town's responsibility to protect public safety
- Constitutional protections under the Fourth Amendment to the United States Constitution and the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution
- Federal nondiscrimination requirements under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

Courts have consistently affirmed that local governments may not be compelled to enforce federal regulatory programs, including civil immigration enforcement.

PROBLEM 1 – Federal Immigration Enforcement Practices and Community Impact

ICE/HSI operations have been reported to disrupt the sense of safety and normalcy in Southold Town, creating fear and increasing the risk of dangerous or potentially unlawful interactions.

Observed Concerns

- Agents reportedly travel at high speeds on residential streets, where speed limits do not exceed 30 mph, creating unsafe driving conditions for others and, at times, obstructing residents traveling to work or school.
- Vehicles often have fully blacked-out windows, preventing visibility into the vehicle (state law requires at least 70% light transmission through front side windows and windshield).
- Use of unmarked civilian vehicles (e.g., Ford F-150, Subaru Legacy) creates uncertainty about whether individuals are law enforcement or private actors.
- Agents are masked and heavily armed, which may appear disproportionate in cases involving civil, nonviolent immigration matters.
- Lack of visible identification or warrants creates confusion about the legitimacy of operations.

- There have been multiple reports of force used against nonviolent individuals, including protestors and detainees.

These practices contribute to:

- Fear of racial profiling and detention without cause (while federal law allows questioning based on suspicion, detention requires legal justification and racial profiling violates Southold Town's policies prohibiting racial profiling)
- School absenteeism following enforcement activity
- Workforce disruption and business closures due to employee absence
- Reduced access and willingness to access even the most necessary healthcare and essential services
- Broader economic and social disruption due to fear and uncertainty

Recommendations

Adopt OLA Draft Legislation:

With particular attention to

- **Section 4 – Communication Protocols**
Southold Police Department (STPD) will notify the Town Supervisor upon confirmed information that federal immigration enforcement activity is occurring. *Modification:* The Supervisor will notify:
 - Town Board Members/Police Commissioners
 - School administrators
 - The Greenport Village Mayor

Schools and local government may then activate appropriate protocols to support community safety and communication.

STPD will provide a report to the Town Board Members / Police Commissioners regarding the response of STPD to said federal action. This report will be made available to the public at their request.

- **Section 6 – Identification Verification**
STPD may request identification from any individuals engaged in immigration enforcement activities.
 - This step correlates with STPD's own rule (Chapter A290, Article 4: Conduct)
- **Section 4. D Establishment of Town/Village Board Community Task Force on Immigration Enforcement.**

- This ongoing vehicle ensures communication and representation of relevant stakeholders as the federal immigration enforcement rollout continues.

Police Staffing and Resource Needs

- STPD has identified a need for additional personnel to meet existing public safety demands, which are further strained during federal enforcement activities.

Recommendations

- Allocate emergency management funding to:
 - Hire additional police officers
 - Provide specialized training (including de-escalation and peacekeeping)
- Increase patrol presence in areas more frequently impacted, specifically Greenport
- Create a new police sector for Greenport village with allocation of personnel and resources commensurate with the village's density and potential, given previous experience, for targeting by federal immigration officers.

Potential Impacts and Considerations

- A visible local police presence may:
 - Encourage adherence to lawful and constitutional enforcement practices.
 - Provide verification of agent identity and warrants.
 - Facilitate communication with families regarding detainees (e.g., charges, location for detainment).
 - Support humane and nonviolent treatment of individuals on scene.
 - Help ensure community observers exercise their rights lawfully. Coordinate with Rapid Response to support observers staying within legal boundaries.
 - Be able to obtain and relay information about detainee location to the Town Supervisor for recording purposes and appropriate follow-up.

Public Education Recommendations

- Conduct a public information campaign outlining:
 - Legal rights and responsibilities of residents.
 - Appropriate conduct when observing or recording enforcement activity.
 - Make any statements made by STPD regarding immigration enforcement more visible to the public.
- The Southold Town website (including the STPD pages/information) should be made fully accessible for language access; currently, not all sections are available for translation.

- Lead workshops in collaboration with Rapid Response meant to keep the public safe.
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PROBLEM 2 – Perception of Collaboration with Federal Enforcement (as described by STPD Leadership)

The presence of Southold PD at a scene with ICE/HSI may be perceived as a form of collaboration, potentially eroding public trust

Recommendation

Adopt OLA Draft Legislation:

- **Section 5 – Section 5: Federal Immigration Enforcement Operations on Town/Village Property Prohibited in Certain Cases.**

Recommended Additional Legislative Provisions

- Town employees are prohibited from collaborating with ICE/HSI in civil immigration enforcement other than to ensure public safety.
- “No Civil Immigration Detention” – Town facilities shall not be used to detain individuals for civil immigration purposes without a judicial warrant.
- Southold Town shall not enter into or participate in agreements under Section 287(g) of the Immigration and Nationality Act.

Potential Impacts and Considerations

- Avoids perception of collaboration between federal agents and local law enforcement, thereby strengthening trust with the public.
 - Protects the police department from having officers and/or police department administrators appropriated for immigration work.
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Additional Recommendations

- Issue public statements on an ongoing basis to clarify the following:
 - The Town does not assist federal immigration enforcement.
 - The Town’s role is to ensure public safety and lawful conduct.
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PROBLEM 3 – Safety Risks to Local Police During Federal Operations

STPD has indicated that responding to ICE/HSI activity may place Southold Town Police Department officers in potentially unsafe or unclear operational situations.

Response

- Public safety remains the primary responsibility of STPD
- As outlined in Problem 1, federal enforcement activity poses the risk of a human-made emergency, creating an extraordinary risk of hazardous conditions requiring a coordinated response to protect public safety.

Recommendation

- Require STPD deployment of officers to any verified ICE/HSI action within the Town's borders to attend for the duration of federal enforcement activity.
 - Expand training in:
 - De-escalation especially as relates to
 - Emergency response coordination
 - Situational risk management
 - Clarify internal protocols for officer presence during federal operations to reduce risk and ambiguity.
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PROBLEM 4 – Erosion of Public Trust and Perceived Lack of Safe Community Access

Community trust in law enforcement is declining with regard to protection of public safety during federal immigration actions in our Town. As demonstrated by the public's testimony and numbers at Town Board meetings, this is experienced particularly among populations that may feel targeted and non-target community members concerned about disruption in daily life and public safety resulting from federal immigration enforcement actions.

Potential Impacts

- Members of the town community will grow in their lack of trust in the police
- Reduced reporting of crime
- Unwillingness to cooperate with the police
- Reluctance to call 911 in emergencies
- Reluctance to attend court dates
- Economic and social disruption

Recommendation

- Adopt Task Force (OLA legislation) Section 4, outlined in Problem 1
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Additional Steps

Continue Ongoing Updates to STPD Commissioners Regarding Evolving STPD Preparation for Responding to Federal Immigration Enforcement

- STPD officer protocols and planned responses to federal immigration enforcement activity will be regularly shared with the ST Police Commissioners as they are developed and implemented.

License Plate Recognition (LPR) Technology

- End utilization of FLOCK cameras due to concerns about data sharing.
 - In the interim, adopt strict usage limitations, including:
 - Use only for legitimate law enforcement purposes.
 - Prohibition on use for civil immigration enforcement.
 - Restricted and logged access.
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Public Education and Transparency

- Develop informational videos demonstrating:
 - How to identify official Southold PD officers and vehicles.
 - Differences between local officers and federal agents.
 - Lawful behaviors when engaging in constitutionally guaranteed right to protest.
 - Example: https://www.instagram.com/reel/DLnxfK_TclX/
 - Provide materials in English and Spanish.
 - Conduct school-based workshops to:
 - Educate students on identifying law enforcement roles.
 - Educate students on lawful behaviors when engaging in constitutionally guaranteed right to protest.
 - Reinforce the protective role of local officers.
 - Provide ongoing public assurances about the role of Southold Town Police as that of maintaining public safety and monitoring the activities of federal agents.
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Closing Note

This document reflects the Task Force’s initial charge to clearly identify challenges and outline potential responses within current legal frameworks. It is intended to support the Town Board's informed decision-making while acknowledging the complexity and sensitivity of these issues.