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## Variations in Community Policing: Form Follows Function

### Research in Brief

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## Introduction

Widespread interest in community policing continues. Whether one reads the extensive literature on the subject or reviews current practices, however, there is no single articulated form of community policing. Instead police agencies are engaged in a diverse set of practices united by the general idea that the police and the public need to become better partners in order to control crime, disorder and a host of other community problems. Although numerous police agencies are practicing some form of community policing, little is known about the variations of community policing.

To fill the information gap, the Police Executive Research Forum developed case studies of community policing in six geographically diverse cities: Las Vegas, NV, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, Philadelphia, PA, Santa Barbara, CA, Savannah, GA, and Newport News, VA. The underlying research question which initially shaped this study was: "What are police departments *actually* doing when they say they are doing community policing?" The question was not difficult to answer. These six police agencies used a wide variety of organizational configurations and activities to carry out their community policing initiatives. Savannah and Newport News primarily used generalist patrol officers, supplemented, respectively, by bike and foot patrols and community substations; Las Vegas used a special unit approach, a tactical team of officers to address severe crime-related problems; Santa Barbara effectively combined a special unit of problem-solving officers (known as beat coordinators) with a generalist approach in which patrol officers, investigators and other personnel such as dispatchers also participated in addressing problems; and Edmonton primarily used emergency response teams and decentralized community policing

stations to handle citizens' problems. Philadelphia's approach to community policing appeared to be focused primarily at the captain level, with participation in community meetings and public outreach.

Thus, the initial research question of "*what* are the police departments doing?" gave way to a more specific research focus explored in this executive summary: "*Why* are these widely varying approaches to community policing manifested in police agencies whose stated goals and objectives appear to be closely related?" Although these case studies were not designed to be evaluative in nature, by studying the actual practice and application of community policing in diverse settings, PERF has learned a great deal about the form and function of this increasingly popular approach to policing.

### **Research Methods and Objectives**

The study began with a site-selection process in which PERF research staff scrutinized published literature and conducted telephone interviews with knowledgeable academicians, police practitioners and government officials to compose a listing of police agencies believed to be substantially engaged in community policing and with some historical basis of experience. There was no perceived benefit to this research project in studying agencies which had only recently launched their community policing efforts or whose community policing efforts were narrowly-focused.

The initial research process revealed numerous American police agencies engaged in the practice of community policing. Approximately 30 of these agencies were contacted to confirm their participation in community policing and to gather basic information about their

approach to community policing and related activities. Six agencies, all self-described participants in community policing, were selected for study. These agencies were selected upon the basis of geographic variation, city size variation and because of their apparent commitment to and participation in community policing.

To guide the development of site-specific case studies, PERF developed a standardized interview protocol. This protocol included questions about the context and environment of the police agency, agency characteristics and operating style, planning, implementation and management processes used for community policing, collaboration with the community and other agencies, and measures of effectiveness. Direct interviews were carried out in 1992 with patrol officers and supervisors engaged in community policing, police managers, and police executives as well as city officials and a limited number of community members. The collection of formal documentation, such as general orders, mission statements, performance appraisal forms, officer activity logs and training curricula. The site-specific research was carried out by a team of six police practitioner investigators, primarily during a one-week on-site visit supplemented with follow-up telephone interviews. The investigators, selected through a competitive process based on their knowledge of community policing in their own agencies, prepared narrative case studies summarizing and illustrating their findings. (These case studies are available in a document published separately by the Police Executive Research Forum.)

### **Diversity of Community Policing**

These case studies revealed no evidence of a single pervasive model of community

policing. The six cities and their police departments in the study varied dramatically in their approach to community policing, a variance most apparent in the terminology used in each agency. The Santa Barbara Police Department's combined special unit and generalist approach was known as COPS or Community-Oriented Problem Solving. The Metropolitan Las Vegas Police Department's special unit was known as Line Solution Policing.

Savannah Police Department's Community Oriented Policing/Problem-Oriented Policing or COP/POP initiative and Newport News Police Department's Neighborhood Oriented Policing effort used generalist approaches to community policing based on a decentralization to smaller police beats, with the same cadre of officers assigned to the areas, throughout each city. The community policing approach of the Edmonton, Alberta, Police Service -- known as Community Oriented Policing -- is also decentralized, involving the location of service delivery centers throughout the city. A different approach is embodied by Philadelphia, which conducts Community Policing effort primarily at the captain level.

The cities in this study varied in terms of geographic location, including one non-American city -- Edmonton, AL, Canada -- and five diverse U.S. cities. The cities included a variety of sizes although three were clearly smaller cities with less than 200,000 population, while the remaining three ranged from more than half a million residents to three times that number. The number of personnel varied widely, ranging from Philadelphia's 7,354 personnel to Santa Barbara's 228. The ratio of sworn personnel to population also indicated the variation among the agencies. The number of sworn personnel per 1,000 population ranged from Philadelphia's 4.4 to the 1.6 mark of Santa Barbara, Newport News and Las Vegas.

Personnel varied in other ways. The ethnic composition of all sworn personnel in

agencies ranged from Savannah's 38 percent representing persons of color to the 13 percent persons-of-color composition of the Las Vegas agency. (Persons of color in the departments were underrepresentative of the population in every city studied although no data was available for Edmonton.) In terms of educational level of officers, 95 percent of all patrol officers in Santa Barbara reported having more than a high school diploma (43 percent had a college degree or more education) while in Philadelphia, 45 percent of patrol officers reported having only a high school diploma. The educational level of the other four agencies fell within these endpoints.

### **Santa Barbara**

Santa Barbara is a quiet and picturesque city of less than 100,000 formal residents overlooking the Pacific Ocean. Some 100 miles north of Los Angeles and 250 miles south of San Francisco, the community is sheltered from the urban woes that have challenged its urban neighbors. The city has a reputation for being an enclave to the rich and famous, although its largely working class population struggles with a high cost of living (particularly for real estate) and problems related to incorporating and serving a large and unofficial immigrant population. Officially, the city's population is 39 percent nonwhite but unofficial estimates are that much more of the city's population consists of undocumented Mexicans which contributes to latent ethnic tensions and significant language barriers with which the police department's mostly Caucasian force must often struggle.

The city's police department is led by a vigorous police chief, Richard Breza, a product of the city's own police force. Since taking the helm as chief in 1987, Breza, guided

by a philosophical commitment to the idea of problem solving and community interaction, has molded the organization of 138 sworn personnel into an agency which is more integrated in community activities, from working with small business groups to the local housing agency and a host of other city agencies.

The department's approach to community policing includes the use of a team of six officers, known as beat coordinators, who focus their attention on specific problems within the six geographic beats which comprise the city. The beat coordinators are supplemented by other patrol officers and special units (such as the bicycle patrol), which alternately provide resources to the beat coordinators or conduct their own problem-solving efforts, using the beat coordinator for guidance and coordination. The beat coordinators are organizationally located within the department's Patrol Division in order to better coordinate information and cooperation among the beat coordinators and other patrol officers. Despite their existence as a special unit, the beat coordinators routinely handle calls for service for a portion of their shift.

## **Las Vegas**

In stark contrast to Santa Barbara, Las Vegas is a town that never sleeps. The gambling industry, the city's economic foundation, operates around the clock. But few of the city's crime problems are related to gambling, at least partially because the casinos maintain strict security systems and take steps to ensure the perceived and actual safety of their patrons.

The strong racial tension in Las Vegas between the city's black and white populations

is palpable. During the aftermath of the Rodney King incident in Los Angeles, the city of Las Vegas was poised for massive protests and civil disorder among the minority residents. Indeed, a period of civil disorder with rioting, fires and attendant violence occurred in the spring of 1992. The tensions exist within a large and growing metropolitan area. With nearly three-quarters of a million population, the city is located in one of the fastest growing metropolitan areas in the United States, expanding by approximately 5,000 persons per month.

Policing in the metropolitan Las Vegas area occurs under a political umbrella. The agency is headed by an elected sheriff, who is reportedly retiring prior to the next election, and three political command level appointees, who serve at the pleasure of the sheriff. The consolidated city-county jurisdiction provides a huge geographic service area; one can drive two hours down major highways and still be within the confines of the agency's service area.

The Las Vegas Police Department has also used a relatively decentralized special unit approach in its community policing effort. The department's Line Solution Policing (LSP) effort provides teams of officers to police area commands throughout the city, who have the latitude to engage in proactive activities to address specific community problems -- especially those related to gangs, drugs and burglaries. The units were suspended in mid-1993 in an effort to expand the approach to all patrol officers within the agency. This change occurred following the conclusion of on-site data collection.

## **Savannah**

The historic Spanish moss-swathed city of Savannah, GA, is nestled on banks of the Savannah River near its mouth at the Atlantic Ocean. The narrow streets and numerous

public squares as laid out by the city's founder James Oglethorpe in 1733 constitute the core of one of the nation's largest historic districts. Although tourism is not the city's major industry, it is a growing and important part of the local economy.

The city has been troubled by severe crime problems in recent years, including a high rate of violent crime and concomitant fear among the city's residents and businesses, particularly for the possibility of its adverse impact upon tourism. The city is majority black (51 percent) with little other ethnic diversity, but most political power positions appear to be held by whites. The police department has made great efforts to include black representation; 36 percent of the department's personnel are black and blacks appear well-represented throughout the command structure.

Ethnic tensions did not directly motivate Savannah's community policing initiative. It was driven instead by political sensitivity to the growing violent crime problem, which crested in 1991. The problem threatened the reelection and subsequently resulted in the loss of the mayor's seat by a 20-year incumbent. The political instability during the election period provided a forum for the city's manager and sitting mayor, in league with the chief of police, to craft and fund a full-fledged community policing effort. The department previously had implemented elements of such a community policing effort; the election-motivated initiative provided teeth and funding to buoy the previously ad hoc effort.

The Savannah Police Department's approach to community policing is based upon the decentralization of patrol activities to each of four precincts in a geographic area commanded by a captain. Each captain is responsible for using resources and encouraging officers to engage in problem-solving efforts. There appear to be some differences in the level in which

problem-solving or community involvement activities occur within the city, based upon competing demands (such as heavy call loads) in each precinct and the personal approach of the patrol captain in carrying out the mandate in his area command. Savannah's most visible implementation activity in fulfilling the community policing initiative is a commitment to formal training of all personnel, civilian and sworn. Fully 95 percent of officer survey respondents indicated they had received formal training, and a third of those had received more than 17 hours of training in Community Oriented Policing/Problem Oriented Policing (COP/POP). This was significantly more training than occurred in any other agency.

### **Newport News**

The approach to community policing in Newport News, VA, is similar to that of Savannah, for the department is utilizing generalist officers assigned to relatively fixed beats. The department has divided the city into geographic areas based upon workload factors and officers are assigned to permanent beats. Unlike Savannah, the patrol areas are much smaller and are designed to increase an officer's knowledge and familiarity with an area. Although the department has struggled with issues related to beat integrity -- particularly in terms of limiting cross dispatching of officers to other beats -- additional resources were being sought in 1993 in order to alleviate the resource problem. In addition to the beat reconfiguration, patrol lieutenants (rather than captains) were given 24-hour responsibility for patrol areas. The city consists of two geographically distinct patrol divisions dividing the 22-mile long city; a main headquarters and a patrol station serve as the focus of patrol functions for the department. In addition, efforts were being made to develop several community store fronts

to serve citizens directly.

Newport News is a blue collar city dominated by the shipbuilding industry and strongly influenced by the military installations in the adjacent city of Norfolk. Located on a peninsula jutting out into the southern end of the Chesapeake Bay of Virginia, Newport News is part of a huge metropolitan area of more than 1.4 million population.

Newport News was an interesting city for inclusion in this study for it represented something of an anomaly among community policing agencies. The department first experimented with and adopted the concept of problem-oriented policing in the mid-1980s under the leadership of its previous chief of police. The agency achieved something of a national reputation for its approach and became a model for departments implementing problem-solving. Despite its perceived success, however, the approach examined in this study was the department's newer Neighborhood Oriented Policing effort, circa mid-1992. Although the department had not abandoned its problem-oriented policing approach, the agency's then-chief Jay Carey had envisioned the department's problem-solving effort as being carried out at a highly decentralized level in order to provide greater and more systematic interaction between police officers and area residents. Carey, chief since 1986, believes the decentralized approach will also enable officers to become more familiar with particular problems that cause citizens concern in their neighborhoods. The reconstituted Neighborhood Oriented Policing (NOP) effort in Newport News represented the "youngest" of the community policing initiatives studied.

## **Edmonton**

More than 600,000 citizens live in Edmonton, the capital city of the province of Alberta in western Canada. Located roughly due north of Missoula, Montana, Edmonton is a city whose economy is built upon the oil and petrochemical industries and is sometimes referred to as the Houston of Canada. Following a boom period of the late 1970s and early 1980s, Edmonton suffered an economic slump with the decline of the oil business. The resultant financial pressure within the city resulted in major belt tightening in the city's police agency and contributed to paycuts and a freeze on hiring.

By the early 1990s, restricted police growth had become incompatible with the city's burgeoning calls for service. The agency developed a unique form of community policing in order to get a handle on the excessive number of calls for police service which had burdened the agency and improve operating efficiency. The initiative was also developed as a means to bring police officers closer to the community and to address specific community problems. The department created customer service centers scattered throughout the jurisdiction which were designed to encourage citizen reporting as well as increase interaction with the police.

This service-oriented approach to citizens occurred at the behest of the Edmonton Police Commission, a policymaking group appointed by the mayor to provide direction to the police. The board used its major policymaking role -- hiring the police department's chief -- as a means to specifically direct the department's future toward community policing.

## **Philadelphia**

Philadelphia is a traditional East Coast city and, like many of its sister cities, it

suffering from economic woes during the 1980s. Economic difficulties caused the police force to shrink dramatically during the period although the city still maintains a 4.4 officer per 1,000 population ratio, a staffing reinforced by the strong police union, the deep political roots of the police agency and a steeply vertical organizational structure. The department is run by a commissioner of police who is appointed and serves at the pleasure of the city's mayor. There is no city manager form of government here; the elected mayor operates all of city government and key appointees serve at his will.

Philadelphia's community policing effort can be traced to the MOVE bombing that occurred in 1985 and resulted in the destruction of two city blocks and resultant conflict between the citizens and police. Commissioner Kevin Tucker, formerly of the Secret Service, was appointed as a reform commissioner. Serving from 1986 to 1988, Tucker was the first and only outside police commissioner ever to serve in that position.

The form of community policing in Philadelphia occurs primarily under the direction of police captains who command the dozens of patrol districts within the jurisdiction. In addition to patrol officers and detectives, each captain supervises what is known as a Five Squad, consisting of specialized officers who deal with community problems. Within a district, the Five Squad includes Community Relations, Victims Assistance, Crime Prevention, Sanitation and Abandoned Auto officers -- each with specialized responsibilities and assigned to deal with common community problems. Regular patrol officers and detectives have not yet been integrated into community policing. However, the community policing effort is also structured to utilize Police District Advisory Panels, citizens groups which meet regularly and provide input to the district captains. The panels were created under Tucker and strengthened

under Commissioner Willie Williams, who succeeded Tucker and served as commissioner until taking the helm of the Los Angeles Police Department.

### **Primary forms of community policing**

These case studies represent six diverse cities and six unique approaches to loosely clustered objectives related to enhancing crime prevention, increasing police accountability and coproduction of public safety. Although the community policing initiatives were widely varied, there were some noteworthy issues of convergence.

Among the agencies studied, two primary approaches to community policing emerged. One approach can be described as a community engagement model, characterized by police efforts to increase interaction with citizens. Such efforts typically involved citizen satisfaction surveys, police attendance at community meetings, bicycle and foot patrols, establishment of police storefronts or substations, citizen academies, Neighborhood Watch groups and police involvement in youth-related activities including recreational and mentoring efforts.

The focus of these community engagement efforts was not essentially to build relationships with citizens to achieve police objectives -- such as increasing information about specific crimes -- but to interact with the community's 'law-abiding' residents in forging a bond against the non-law-abiding individuals. Police involved in these community engagement activities were sometimes familiar with citizens, easily calling some residents by name and engaging a like response from community members. Despite their involvement and interaction with community members, these police efforts appeared to reflect community *engagement*, not community empowerment or coproduction of public safety. Importantly,

community engagement efforts appeared to emphasize the responsibility of police for crime-related and disorder problems, rather than embodying the notion of joint or broadened responsibility for public safety.

The second primary approach to community policing was a problem-oriented model. Such efforts typically involved three defining features: patrol officers played the principal role in identification of problems for police attention; some detailed investigation of specific problems was conducted through various avenues such as crime analysis, extended observations of conditions, and discussions with victims, service providers, or others; and problem resolution typically involved extensive collaboration within the police agency or with other public and private agencies or individuals, such as city agencies, landlords, merchants, or numerous others. Problem-solving efforts did not *routinely* involve interaction with community members.

Neither of the primary approaches to community policing which emerged in this study appeared in a pure form. Each department combined elements of community engagement and problem solving. In at least two departments -- Santa Barbara and Edmonton -- problem-solving approaches formed the framework and provided direction for community policing efforts. In those cities, police used community engagement activities such as community meetings or foot patrol -- to learn about concerns of the community, gain information about specific problems, set priorities for addressing problems, and involve the community in resolving problems. In contrast, in Philadelphia -- a department in which the community engagement model appeared to dominate -- community meetings provided opportunities to *listen* to citizens' concerns, such as complaints about police service or prevailing community

problems; these meetings served to set priorities for patrol tasks, such as directed patrols.

The distinctions between community engagement and problem-solving approaches are subtle, since most agencies integrate the two in some important ways. The departments all use the same organizational forms to carry out community policing – community meetings, foot patrols, substations and so forth. These visible manifestations of community policing may mislead the casual observer of community policing. These activities comprise the community policing initiative for an agency involved *only* in community engagement. For the agency engaged in both community engagement and problem solving, these activities constitute a vehicle for addressing community-level problems.

Most departments use both approaches to community policing, yet one approach may dominate the other. This view of community policing approaches can be viewed on a continuum, represented in a two-by-two matrix. The table demonstrates that agencies vary their emphasis on community engagement or problem solving.

### Dimensions of Community Policing

	High Level Problem-Solving	Low Level Problem-Solving
High Level Community Engagement	Santa Barbara Edmonton Savannah	Philadelphia
Low Level Community Engagement	Newport News Las Vegas	

Consistent with the discussion, this table suggests that Philadelphia’s community policing emphasis is upon engaging the community while Newport News and Las Vegas emphasis addressing specific community problems. Santa Barbara, Edmonton and Savannah

integrate the two approaches on a relatively equivalent and high level.

### **Form Follows Function**

Perhaps the most important question asked during on-site data collection was:

*Why* [emphasis added] did the department make the decision to develop a community policing program? How was the decision made? What historical events preceded the decision to implement community policing? Was there a key event that led to community policing being implemented?

The varying answers to this question appeared to have played a major role in shaping the type of community policing adopted by each of the six agencies. For the agencies in this study, this answer related to the presence of a stimulus which motivated the department to launch its community policing efforts. Two primary stimuli were identified which motivated movement towards community policing: troubled race relations, particularly between police and minority communities; and rising crime problems and difficulty in handling workload demands generated by increasing calls for service. The former increased the likelihood of a community engagement approach while the latter increased the prevalence of a problem-oriented approach. It should be noted that these stimuli were not articulated with a single voice but inferred from hundreds of interviews conducted for the study.

Personnel in each of the six agencies spoke with contradictory voices about the definition, goals and objectives of the department's community policing effort. The absence of clearly stated or understood goals and objectives was apparent because of widespread confusion among officers about the nature and objectives of community policing, the future of community policing and its historical development within their own agency. Despite extensive training in some agencies, confusion or lack of consensus -- about goals,

organizational direction and the meaning of community policing -- was extremely common among police personnel. This finding suggests that extensive use of community policing rhetoric in agencies implementing community policing may be an important means of police leadership. The rhetoric, however, should be paired with substantive and specific information about community policing.

Confusion about departmental goals for community policing existed despite numerous organizational changes implemented to enhance community policing. Such changes ranged from hiring and promotional practices, in-service training, the establishment of fixed beats and steady shifts, modification of performance appraisal systems and promotional processes, establishment of internal communication practices and so forth to support community policing efforts. Such confusion among officers about community policing was minimized in agencies that invested more resources in communicating with their officers. Including community policing on promotional reading lists, extensive training, and extensive interdepartmental communications helped to minimize confusion and several departments had invested vast resources into such efforts. This investment of resources appeared to be necessary to permeate officers' traditional view of police work. The difficulty of this task may have been exacerbated by a tendency to view community policing as a fad that would change with the political winds of the various cities.

## **Conclusion**

Police departments and cities implement community policing for radically different purposes or reasons that are peculiar to individual cities. This variation in motivation or

purpose results in the differing forms of community policing by city and affects how community policing diffuses within different police departments.

The variation in community policing suggests that the concept of community policing makes sense only within the local context. Thus, the only appropriate method in which to evaluate community policing is not to contrast one police agency with another but to look within a single police agency to determine changes over time. Relevant changes over time include those characteristics which the police department has sought to change. Of course, this suggests the agency's leadership must clearly state that agency's objectives of community policing. The difficulty with the contemporary rhetoric of community policing is that clear and measurable objectives are not always specified. If objectives can be articulated, then appropriate evaluation measures can be developed to reflect the agency's progress towards meeting those objectives.

The variation in community policing approaches observed in these six cases through the literature suggests that further research can be done to assist with evaluating the effectiveness of alternative approaches within an agency. Although one could evaluate changes in police operational approaches, there is nothing particularly new in the arena of alternative call handling, decentralization efforts and deployment alternatives. More research and evaluation could be done about police handling of specific problems, particularly those which the community finds especially troubling, such as violent crime in specific neighborhoods, strong arm robberies, youth-involved homicides or other discrete problems.

Further evaluation could reflect the success with which various police agencies are able to achieve their objectives within their local context, such as increasing the perception of

minority access to police services, reducing specific community problems or more efficiently managing departmental resources.

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**Community Policing in Las Vegas:  
Back to the Basics in a High Stakes Town**  
by Chief Mike Butler  
Longmont, CO, Police Department

Life is simple and safe in a quiet little town called Mayberry. There, every friendly face is a familiar one to the two-man police force that protects the town. Strolling from the barber shop to the general store, Andy Griffith and Barney Fife converse with each citizen on a daily basis. Aunt Bea, Goober and the other townspeople are always willing to lend a helping hand to other citizens in need.

Upholding justice from the rustic, one-room jailhouse, characters of the "Andy Griffith Show" were perhaps some of America's first role models for community policing. The sleepy town of Mayberry epitomized the bare bones essence of community policing: knowing the neighbors and understanding their needs.

In stark contrast to Mayberry is a real-life town that never sleeps, called Las Vegas, where community policing isn't quite so easy. This racy oasis in the desert has more to contend with than a handful of citizens and a few small businesses. Flashy casinos and glamorous nightclubs line "the Strip," where gambling and high stakes are the first order of business for thousands of tourists.

But past the bright light lures and neon promises of the Strip, is a place well over half a million people call home. And though it's no easy task, these citizens struggle to know their neighbors and the police force attempts to understand their needs.

Through the 1980s, the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department (Metro) considered itself an aggressive department and was, as Undersheriff Eric Cooper stated, "a faceless entity within the community." Several members of Metro described their policing

philosophy as one in which police officers "kicked ass and took names." There was a "us vs. them" mentality between the police officers and the citizens. Today, local government, including Metro, is committed to being a significant community component that fosters a safer and healthier environment. Metro's self image is no longer that of a schoolyard bully. Teamwork and partnership are now the watchwords that guide its decisions.

As part of that commitment, in 1989, Metro developed the Line Solution Policing (LSP) program to address narcotics and gang activity on the west side of Las Vegas. The LSP concept was a departure from traditional policing for Metro. LSP officers were charged with using innovative, proactive methods to eliminate repetitive calls for service and empowering citizens to solve problems. LSP teams were authorized to tackle problems in targeted areas by employing a carefully balanced combination of enforcement and prevention approaches to crime reduction. While in the beginning LSP focused on identifying root social causes of crime, it later regressed to a program that concentrated primarily on the reduction of serious crime and the apprehension of offenders through rather traditional policing approaches.

The community policing approach was adopted by Metro as a policing philosophy after the spring 1992 Rodney King verdict sparked major civil unrest on the west side of Las Vegas. The residents of the west side are predominantly black, and many live in the public housing developments where the riots occurred. As Undersheriff Cooper stated, "We are leaning towards community policing because of the riots ... and it is primarily for the minority community."

While definitions of community policing within Metro ranged from foot patrol

programs to the co-production of public safety with the community nearly every person we interviewed strongly believed in the underlying concepts of community policing and the potential for it to work to reduce crime-related problems in the Las Vegas metropolitan area.

However, several internal and external forces plagued Metro as it struggled to implement a community policing approach. Civil unrest, racial issues, a recent population boom, an election for a new sheriff, undeveloped management systems, a fairly young and inexperienced department, citizen demands for more and different services, and the struggle to blend traditional and non-traditional police services, are but a few of the challenges Metro faced in implementing community policing.

### **The City of Las Vegas**

Nevada's largest jurisdiction, Clark County, sprawls over 7,500 square miles and is inhabited by approximately 1,100,000 people. The city of Las Vegas covers a mere 53 square miles of Clark County's desert expanse but is home to nearly 70% of the county's population. The Las Vegas valley is one of the fastest growing metropolitan areas in the United States, expanding by approximately 5,000 people per month. Demographically, Las Vegas is 72% white, 13% Hispanic, 11% black and 4% American Indian and Asian.

In 1973, the city of Las Vegas Police Department and Clark County Sheriff's Department consolidated to form the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department. Metro provides most of the law enforcement-related sheriff functions for Clark County -- it operates a jail, for example -- but the city of Las Vegas is the focal point for police services delivered by Metro.

Metro is financed by both the city of Las Vegas and Clark County on a percentage basis determined by a formula consisting of calls for service, population, and other factors. For the most part, Metro is autonomous and establishes its own goals and objectives regarding the delivery of police services. Bill Noonan, the Las Vegas city manager, stated, "Every year we write Metro a \$43 million check, and we are not sure how the money is spent." Government leaders, including Noonan, stated that Metro and its staff are very cooperative in trying to resolve community issues, and, according to Las Vegas Mayor Jan Laverty-Jones, "there is a tremendous amount of coordination between Metro and other city departments."

Interstate I-15 winds down the middle of Las Vegas, creating a geographical boundary for Metro and dividing the city into east and west sections. However, the separation is more than geographical. The west side is a socio-economically deprived area where citizens see themselves as isolated from the mainstream of Las Vegas. According to a city-wide survey conducted by Metro in 1990, most residents of Las Vegas reported that they felt safe within their community, but 75% of the people who participated in the survey also said they had changed their lifestyles in previous years due to fear of crime. While the same survey indicated that most people believed Metro was doing an "excellent" or "good" job, the black community did not share those same sentiments.

The relationship between the residents of the west side and the police has been exacerbated by some recent events. In July 1990, Metro was criticized after three officers entered the apartment of a black casino floorman and placed him in a fatal headlock. In April 1992, riots sparked by the Rodney King verdict in a predominantly black area of the west

side left relationships between blacks and the police hostile and tense. Fires, attacks on the police, sniper fire and various minor and serious violations of the law occurred at this time. In addition, in February 1993, two officers shot and killed a black man who threatened them with a knife.

When we spoke with Metro officers in February 1993, most felt a repeat of the spring 1992 riot was inevitable. But as Los Angeles was spared the riots after the officers were found guilty in the beating of Rodney King, so, too, was Las Vegas. However, the tension between the police and the minority community remained in Las Vegas as it did in Los Angeles. People in the community had observed Metro's special units performing tactical maneuvers in preparation for the "inevitable" riot. Chester Richardson, vice president of the local NAACP said, "There's such a desperation here, wanting not just to preserve peace, but to preserve hope."

A veritable paradox existed for Metro. While the agency was attempting to convert to a community policing philosophy driven by its perceived poor relationship with the minority community, it was also preparing for major civil unrest stemming from that same minority community. Said Undersheriff Cooper, "I'm concerned that one event...will set back relations with the black community." Cooper also indicated that Metro officers were feeling stressed and fearful as a result of the tension that was mounting in the relationship between the minority community and the police. And it was in this environment that Metro was implementing community policing.

Tourism is the lifeblood of the area's economy, as Las Vegas receives 23 million visitors annually. Because tourism is the dominant industry in Las Vegas, it is a major factor

in most political decisions. This can be seen in the way the city dealt with the 1992 riots. The ordeal was termed "America's best kept secret" according to Cooper. Had the media publicized the civil unrest, it would no doubt have had a negative impact on the tourism industry.

Policing Las Vegas had grown steadily more complex and demanding over the years leading up to the advent of LSP. Mirroring the large growth in the city's population, crime had steadily increased, with gang-related crime (narcotics trafficking and shootings) becoming the number one concern of the community and the police. Homicide, robberies, assaults, and other violent crimes had also increased substantially in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

### **The Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department**

There are over 2,200 authorized positions within Metro, a nationally accredited agency. Approximately 1,080 are commissioned personnel (1.67 per thousand population). The remaining complement consisted of civilian support and detention personnel. The sheriff, administrative staff, and investigation unit are located at City Hall in downtown Las Vegas. The majority of the Field Services Division personnel work out of four area command substations. Sheriff John Moran had been Metro's chief executive officer (CEO) since the early 1980s. Many people described Moran as the most powerful, influential political figure in the state of Nevada, even though he would not talk to the media and had little or no relationship with city or county government. He epitomized and personified the autonomous nature of Metro. Fiscally, he answered to no one but the voters ever four years at election

time. But he remained popular with his constituencies and was highly respected by the vast majority of personnel we spoke with in Metro. According to several Metro officials, Moran had been very supportive of innovative solutions to crime problems. His term as sheriff was to expire in 1994, and he did not intend to run for a fourth term of office. Moran's top priorities in 1993 included:

- 1) adding 300 more police officers to Metro to properly implement community policing;
- 2) developing a closer working relationship with the community; and
- 3) tackling gang and illegal narcotic problems.

Metro subdivides its jurisdiction into four area commands based on workload and geographical boundaries. Each subdivision is headed by a captain. Metro planned to reorganize its Field Services Division (patrol) so that each area command would consist of three sectors, each headed by a lieutenant. Each of these sectors would have, along with officers who respond to calls for service, a Line Solution Policing Team. Supplementing the beat patrol officer were several specialized units, such as the gang unit and bicycle patrol.

### **Line Solution Policing**

In early 1989, Metro focused on a serious problem facing the community: obvious decay and disorder in certain neighborhoods. Several apartment complexes in the neighborhoods were riddled with gang activity and gang-related crime. The situation placed a heavy burden on police resources, evidenced by a disparate number of service calls to these locations. Metro decided that a large influx of resources would not solve the problem, and called for an innovative approach that included citizen involvement. After coordination with

various government officials and other community leaders, LSP was initiated in July 1989 by Moran.

The LSP concept was, in part, a spin-off of the tactics of Metro's successful neighborhood police team program initiated in a gang-infested public housing development. The establishment of a police substation in the neighborhood had proved effective in restoring security to a fear-ridden community.

Line Solution Policing teams consisted of five to six officers and one sergeant, and were formed with existing resources at each of Metro's area commands. LSP officers were generally not responsible for radio-dispatched calls. Instead, they were expected to identify crime-related problems, develop plans to minimize or resolve the problems, and follow through to ensure solutions were implemented.

LSP teams were formed at each of the three area commands that existed in 1989, with tailored programs and tactics to meet the unique demands of each area command. Area commanders selected LSP team members from a group of officers who had each expressed a willingness to use unconventional policing methods to solve problems. Each officer attended a two-day preparatory seminar presented by Metro that emphasized problem-oriented policing. Team members, working flexible hours, were given the authority to seek out problems and to utilize existing resources as necessary.

In the beginning, LSP was driven by two primary objectives. First, officers were to take appropriate action to reduce non-police related calls regarding loud parties, parking problems, speeding and other similar concerns in those areas in which calls for service were atypically high. 'Appropriate action' meant matching the resources of both governmental and

nongovernmental agencies to problems identified by officers and citizens. The role of the LSP officers was to accelerate responses to community problems. For example, if an area needed new lighting, LSP teams would ensure that lighting was installed by the city. Metro believed that by targeting high-call areas and involving community members in the process, citizens would be better prepared to handle civil matters by themselves in the future. Second, officers were to assist field and investigative personnel in targeting criminals and known crime conditions.

Planning for LSP continued as the program evolved from 1989 to 1993. Because of staffing shortages and service demands, LSP developed primarily into several special enforcement units concerned more with apprehending criminals than searching for the root cause of the problems. Lt. Dennis Cobb, watch commander for the Southeast Area Command, stated, "LSP is essentially enforcement." Several officers, including a senior patrol officer, stated, "LSP has turned into a narcotics unit." A sergeant added that LSP seemed to have shifted its focus "because guys like making arrests and counting arrests."

Confusion about the exact definitions and dimensions of community policing existed within Metro at all levels of the department, but especially among patrol officers. There was apprehension on the part of a few department members who believed the confusion was cause for concern. Cliff Davis, a black lieutenant who had been placed in charge of the west Las Vegas neighborhood where the riots occurred, stated, "one of our problems is that we don't make a distinction between Line Solution Policing, problem-oriented policing, or community policing." Walt Myers, Field Services deputy chief, concurred. "The perception of what community policing is is our biggest concern," he said.

In 1993, community policing in Metro was still in fledgling form and, by several accounts, more talk than walk. The notion of service for citizens and more intimate organizational interaction with the community was developing and evolving. Metro members at all levels espoused the idea that they needed to become more involved with the community. They suggested several ways of minimizing the distinctions between the police and the community, such as assigning officers to foot patrols, having officers get out of their cars more, and encouraging Metro personnel to attend community meetings.

Metro did not have a set of strategies for the development and implementation of community policing. Myers said, "We need to create a five-year plan ... and we need to formalize community policing within Metro." Although Metro had a Planning Bureau, Myers delegated the development of the community policing implementation plan to a lieutenant in the Field Services Division, giving him several weeks to complete it.

The centerpiece of Metro's plan to implement community policing in west Las Vegas was Lt. Davis, who was transferred to the West Area Command after the 1992 riots. It was believed that Davis, because of the relationships he had developed with the business people in that area and because he is black, could serve as a link between the police and the residents of west Las Vegas and effectively lead the community policing initiative in this area.

### **Value-Based Management**

Large 3' x 4' plaques stating Metro's fundamental values hang on the walls of every substation and in strategic areas around headquarters. The impetus for the development of the

values came from Undersheriff Cooper and Lt. Cobb, who believed the department needed several statements that reflected the agency's core values. Before the values were developed, Metro had a short, nondescript mission statement. Cooper coordinated the work of several Metro personnel, who in 1992, developed the values for the organization. Once they were in draft form, about 30 people reviewed and refined the values, putting them into final form. The purpose of the statement of values, according to Cooper, was to assist the organization in making a "shift from a crime fighting agency to a community service agency." It was believed that the fundamental values would become the force that directed the development of Metro's other systems. Metro's fundamental values are as follows:

We believe the People are the source of police authority, and that our Department exists as custodian of that authority through public trust. So far as possible, we reflect community priorities while working to meet our responsibilities, and we respond to well-founded criticism with a willingness to change.

We believe people in our community are entitled to safety and freedom from fear. We are committed to protecting them from crime and we recognize that policing is the concern of everyone in the community; that the public and police share responsibility for protecting and improving the quality of community life.

We believe in the dignity of all people, and recognize our responsibility to treat them with courtesy. In conflict, we must act with professional calm, common sense and sound judgment, particularly when provoked; when we must use force, it will be only that necessary to accomplish our lawful duties. We will never tolerate the abuse of police powers entrusted us by our community.

Working to meet our responsibilities without favor or prejudice, we respect the Constitutional Rights of every person, regardless of their situation. The foundation of policing, and all American government, is the People, and we hold dear the principles embodied in the United States Constitution.

## **Planning**

Crime Analysis, a section within the Planning Bureau, worked closely with the LSP teams, but almost exclusively in tracking crime trends and identifying repeat offenders. Crime Analyst Kurt Zimmer stated that each area command had one or two designated scanners, police officers assigned to be "the eyes and ears of the beat officers." According to Zimmer, the scanners were implementing problem-oriented policing (POP) using the SARA model. The SARA model of problem-solving directs police officers to Scan the environment and identify a problem, Analyze the factors that contribute to the problem, Respond with a targeted solution, and Assess the results of the implemented solution. The scanners attended community meetings and worked with property owners and public housing development managers to deal with gangs and narcotics trafficking.

## **Training**

Lt. Jim Chaney coordinated training within Metro. At the time of the site visit, Chaney believed Metro was in the process of converting to a community policing philosophy, but he had not received direction regarding the development of a training curriculum that would support community policing.

Problem-oriented policing was being taught as a "specialized training" course (3.5 hrs.) in the basic academy; during the course, officers were introduced to the SARA model. Herman Goldstein's book, *Problem-Oriented Policing*, was required reading in the basic academy. The basic academy also provided 24.5 hours of instruction in conflict management, cultural awareness, and public speaking which, Chaney believed, supported the department's

community policing initiative.

All commissioned personnel were required to have a minimum of 24 hours of training each year. A minimum of 12 hours of the 24 had to be new training for the employee. There were no required courses for personnel, with the exception of cultural awareness training. In-service training options included classes or seminars on communication skills, Spanish language skills, and community-oriented policing. These courses were voluntary.

After the civil unrest in 1992, about 20 Metro members attended a train-the-trainer class on verbal judo, a skill that Metro believed would help police officers stay calm and professional under verbal assault. It was intended that those 20 would teach other members of Metro what they learned in this class.

Training regarding LSP was informal. Lt. Davis, who headed the community policing effort in west Las Vegas, stated, "I started at the grass roots, reading books by Robert Trojanowicz and the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) on community policing and problem-oriented policing." Davis said he had not received any formal training regarding problem-oriented policing or community policing from the department.

Sgt. Jeff Russo, who had been in charge of an LSP team since June 1992, stated he had read the book *Beyond 911* but had not received any training in problem-oriented policing. Other Metro members had received some pertinent training. LSP Officer Tony Morales had received three days of community policing training from IACP. In years prior to 1993, IACP had provided three days of in-service community policing training to Metro personnel who volunteered for the classes. Before 1993, few officers who were not part of the LSP teams received any training in community policing concepts.

Lt. Terry Lesney, the Field Training and Evaluation Program (FTEP) coordinator, said, "Our department is in the learning phase of problem-oriented policing and community policing." She believed she had been selected as the FTEP coordinator because she is proactive and had experience teaching POP. Field Services Deputy Chief Myers indicated to her that he wanted to infuse POP into the FTEP.

Lesney taught the three-and-one-half hour block of POP in the basic academy that focused on the SARA model and coordinated with other lieutenants who taught a four-hour block of POP to FTO sergeants. In 1993, a 10-hour block on problem-oriented policing was being put together for the entire staff of the Field Services Division. Lesney had also been charged with integrating basic POP tenets into the critical tasks that needed to be taught to and performed by new recruits while in the FTEP. Lesney said she taught POP within a community policing philosophy framework. By that she meant her teaching instructed police officers that citizens should be engaged as partners in identifying and solving underlying social and criminal problems.

### **Promotion and Selection**

Moran made it clear that successful candidates for promotion would be knowledgeable and supportive of Line Solution Policing and community policing. *Beyond 911* was required reading for the written promotional exams; approximately two out of 100 questions in the written exam covered material in the book. The oral interview also presented the candidate with a problem-solving scenario and other questions to determine the candidate's support for and understanding of LSP. For example, Internal Affairs Sgt. Larry Espinosa stated that his

upcoming promotion to lieutenant was due, in part, to his supportive views of LSP.

The promotional process was geared towards selecting candidates who had the capacity to coach and empower their subordinates, who, in turn, would be able to self-direct their own activities, according to Undersheriff Cooper. Several members of the department stated that the key to developing a community policing ideology in their agency would be the careful selection of organizational leaders -- leaders who reflected the community policing philosophy.

Metro was subject to a consent decree that mandated the department racially reflect the community it serves. Richard Myers, head of the Personnel Division, stated Metro was targeting minorities and females in its recruitment, and also trying to hire police officers who would be community-minded problem solvers. Myers said candidates' community-oriented policing characteristics had been identified through the psychological exam and oral board portion of the selection process.

## **Leadership**

The word "empowerment" was used extensively by managers in Metro. Independence and autonomous thinking were the clear expectations of leaders in Metro. The area command captains were given authority to manage their areas in accordance with the needs of their respective communities. The area command captains had so much independence, some members of the lower ranks perceived inconsistencies in the way the area commands planned and implemented LSP.

Managers were highly complimentary of the leadership philosophy Metro was

promoting. Many believed they had more impact on decisions and were "freer" to be innovative and imaginative in their work. This entrepreneurial spirit also lived in the LSP officers. Tony Morales, an LSP officer in the Southeast Area Command, said his sergeant was very supportive of his decisions. He felt entrusted to do what he believed was necessary in his assignment.

### **Call Management System**

Although the call volume decreased between 1990 and 1993, with partial credit given to the impact of LSP, Metro faced the same dilemma many other police departments experience -- finding time to adequately answer calls for service. Lt. Cobb, a watch commander for the Southeast Area Command, said, "We still foster dependency in the community by use of 911." Response time was still a political issue in Las Vegas. According to Administrative Services Deputy Chief Richard Winget, "Metro has gotten beat up in the past regarding response time."

Administrators at Metro believed police officers had minimal amounts of uncommitted patrol time to conduct problem-oriented policing activities; one deputy chief estimated uncommitted time to be at 11%. Actual uncommitted patrol time appeared to vary from one area command to another. Patrol officers in the Southeast area command estimated between 25% to 40% of their shift was uncommitted. During ride alongs in west Las Vegas, officers indicated they would like to do more problem-oriented policing, but did not have adequate time to do it effectively.

Karen Layne, the planning and research director, stated that the last study Metro

completed to compute uncommitted patrol time was undertaken in 1984. At the time of the site visit, administrators were researching strategies to prioritize calls for service and use other resources within Metro to take reports. Both Deputy Chief Myers and Deputy Chief Winget coordinated this project and indicated Metro would implement an upgraded differential patrol response procedure sometime in 1993. They believed that if differential patrol response were properly implemented, LSP could be practiced by more police officers within Metro. As part of Metro's differential police response, Myers and Winget expected to both civilianize the report-taking process and prioritize calls. Winget indicated there were no plans to involve citizens in the development of the new differential response procedure.

### **Marketing Line Solution Policing and Community Policing**

Metro produces several informational publications for citizens and, in 1992, developed a "Tell Metro What You Think" brochure that encouraged citizens to suggest improvements, compliment an employee, or register a complaint. The brochure was available at any of the area commands and headquarters.

Metro conducts a six-week citizens' academy seven times per year. According to Moran, the academy has been very well-received by the community. It has also been a tremendous help to the department in developing a closer relationship between Metro and citizens.

Metro did not have a comprehensive plan for marketing Line Solution Policing or community policing to members of the community. However, according to Carri Geer, a police beat reporter for the *Las Vegas Review Journal*, Metro "is much more accessible" to

the press than it has been in the past. Metro has occasionally used the media to publicize LSP accomplishments. Metro had one public information officer. Deputy Chief Myers thought Metro should have two or three more people assigned to media relations to facilitate the marketing of community policing, and stated he would recommend hiring or reassigning additional personnel to staff the public information office.

The friction between the minority community and the police department made it difficult for Metro to create a belief within the community that the agency wanted to form partnerships and alliances with citizens to solve community problems. Geer stated she had participated in ride-alongs with Metro officers to see how LSP was carried out. Geer authored a series of articles in August 1992 describing her experiences. The articles outlined the progress black residents and the police had made in developing a cooperative relationship, dealing with crime, and revitalizing neighborhoods in west Las Vegas. Geer said that while Moran did not talk to the press, other Metro officials, particularly Undersheriff Cooper and Lt. Carl Fruge, the public information officer, were very accessible.

### **Recognition and Awards**

Metro has a policy that addresses department commendations and service awards, and recognizes members for successful LSP work. Acknowledgment of commendable actions is published in a monthly administrative notice distributed to all personnel. Metro also recognizes citizens within the community for services rendered in assisting other citizens or the police department.

## **Citizen Participation and Policy Development**

Citizen interaction and involvement in the development of policy and the systems that drive Metro was just beginning in 1993. While no formal mechanism existed that provided an avenue for citizens to express their opinions regarding policy development, Metro had developed several programs that involved citizens. Metro created a Use of Force Board that consisted of a deputy chief, three police officers and four citizens who reviewed citizen allegations of excessive force. The Use of Force Board was not popular amongst the police officers. Andy Anderson, president of the Police Protective Association, believed the board was the administration's way of appeasing the minority community.

High-ranking Metro officials serve on a Police-Community Relations Board that meets once a month to discuss ongoing issues, particularly issues in the minority community. In 1992, the board settled on a 12-point plan to improve police-community relations that included an agreement that officers would refrain from placing suspects in a spread-eagle position.

Lt. Davis stated either he or members of his staff meet with the Housing Authority and Tenant Councils (project representatives) in west Las Vegas on a monthly basis to discuss problems such as abandoned cars, street cleanup, and lighting. Metro entered into partnership agreements with the Housing Authority and Tenant Councils in which expectations for both police and the citizen groups were clearly defined. Davis made it clear that the police "telling [community members] what we are going to do is not going to work in my area. It is paramount the police go to the people and listen to them." However, many Metro personnel appeared reluctant to cede significant control to the community in setting

departmental priorities. Said one high-ranking official, "We tend to tell the public what we think the problems are when we should be asking the public what they want us to do."

### **Metro's Interaction With Other Agencies**

Several members at all levels within Metro stated that the level of cooperation between city and county agencies and the police department was excellent with respect to LSP efforts. Mayor Lavery-Jones and City Manager Noonan confirmed this assessment. LSP officers were encouraged via training and their supervisors to seek out assistance from other agencies to solve community problems.

As part of the LSP program, the Southwest Area Command implemented a project called Community 89109. Community 89109 is the zip code of a district within Las Vegas that deteriorated in the 1980s into an economically deprived, drug-infested, high-crime area.

Through the efforts of Metro officers, 86 different public and private agencies participated in revitalizing the area. The objectives of Community 89109 were to establish one or more community centers, develop a collaborative effort with public schools using the community centers, conduct activities for positive modeling for youth, and develop additional services for families, consistent with the "one-stop-shopping" concept.

This collaborative effort, which was considered a success by members in Metro, as well as the city's mayor, resulted in the procurement of two buildings in the area. One was to be used for the community center and one was to house several local government service offices, such as police, parks and recreation, and Nevada Partners, a job training and placement service. A four-officer bike team worked the target area. Their role was to

provide police service to the area, serve as a deterrent to drug sales, and frequent the Boy's Club and the community center to interact with the kids as mentors. In July 1993, Community 89109 completed its first year. Further plans were being developed for the coordination of activities through the University of Nevada at Las Vegas. Metro evaluated the results of Community 89109 through a series of grant-funded surveys. The survey results will provide future direction for the project.

Several stories emerged in which LSP officers worked directly with public works, the fire department, and city council members to resolve issues. LSP Officer Morales stated he worked in concert with other agencies to revitalize a neighborhood. "Public works is sandblasting the graffiti from the sidewalks and repairing broken windows, and the fire department is repainting fire hydrants," he said. Beat officers seldom interacted with other agencies in the same fashion as the LSP officers, however.

### **Development Needs and Strengths of LSP/Community Policing**

Deputy Chief Myers said that communication, both formal and informal, within Metro needed attention. At the time of the site visit, Myers met with the captains once a month and conveyed most pertinent information to them at that time. Several members of the organization commented that communication about goals and objectives was inconsistent and fragmented. To some, LSP seemed more like a "flavor of the month club" program. A communication breakdown also existed regarding the specialization of units, according to some officers. One officer stated that he was repeatedly uninformed about special ongoing surveillances until he had driven his police car into an area being observed by tactical units.

## Results and Community Perceptions of LSP and Community Policing

Since Line Solution Policing started in 1989, several successes had been documented. Numerous neighborhoods and parks had been taken from the marauding gangs and given back to the citizens. Public housing developments had been purged of narcotics trafficking and gangs. The efforts of Metro in one such project, the Gerson Park Project, received honorable mention from *Parade Magazine's* Exemplary Law Enforcement Program, which identifies initiatives that provide outstanding service to the community. Several businesses, including bars and motels that were generating up to 100 calls per month, had been closed or were working cooperatively with Metro to reduce crime-related problems. A Community Accident Reduction Effort (CARE) had reduced the number of accidents at major intersections.

Metro has one of the premier bicycle units in the United States. It is primarily responsible for patrolling the Strip and the downtown casino area. Traffic is near gridlock in these locations, and bicycles are much quicker to respond to citizens in need, having easier access to the trouble spots. As a result of Metro's additions to the bicycle patrol, reported crime has decreased in these areas.

From 1989 to April 1992, the relationship between the police and the minority community improved, as citizens realized they would directly benefit from the LSP program. Unfortunately, since the civil unrest in the spring of 1992, tension had mounted once again. As mentioned earlier, the 1993 shooting of a black man by two white officers in Las Vegas had exacerbated the conditions. Metro's Southeast Area Command substation recently had been the recipient of gunfire from unknown snipers.

City Manager Noonan believed police-community relations were on the upswing, based on the fact that had not recently received as many letters from citizens about the department as he used to. But Mayor Lavery-Jones believed the minority community "has a real suspicion of the police" even though Metro has done some innovative things in predominantly neighborhoods. Chester Richardson, vice-president of the local NAACP did not believe community policing was being implemented in the economically deprived sections of west Las Vegas. Richardson felt that "Lt. Davis isn't the [sole] answer" to implementing community policing in the area. Richardson believed community policing involves developing partnerships with the community and the media and indicated that these kinds of partnerships had not been developing in west Las Vegas.

Several members of Metro believed that the black leaders who represented the residents of west Las Vegas had their own agendas and were aggravating an already bad situation. City Manager Noonan thought the city's black leaders were not as hostile as they had once been, and that by 1993, minority representatives were working cooperatively with city government and Metro.

## **The Future**

Many unanswered questions remained regarding the direction Metro would take in the future. No one person or collective group of people believed they could accurately forecast what would happen to the agency. Moran did not plan to run for another term in office. The undersheriff and two assistant sheriffs planned to retire when Moran left office, which would create vacancies in the top four positions within Metro.

In 1993, Metro promoted a Neighborhood-Oriented Police Protection and Enforcement (NOPPE) referendum to add 300 more police officers, increase the number of neighborhood substations, and expand the jail. Metro billed NOPPE as a program to develop a partnership between the citizens of the neighborhoods and the police officers assigned to those neighborhoods. Metro asked for citizen support for the referendum to "identify the criminals, catch the criminals, and get the criminals off your neighborhood streets."

Mayor Lavery-Jones said she believed 7,000-8,000 entry-level jobs would open up once three large motels were built on the Strip in 1994. She and other government officials hammered out an agreement with the owners of the motels to earmark those jobs exclusively for the unemployed residents in west Las Vegas. While details had not been developed, it was believed that providing this many jobs to people in economically deprived sections of Las Vegas would assist in the revitalization of those areas.

There were several people within Metro who might be characterized as load-pulling spirits -- leaders of the transition who would help move Metro from practicing primarily traditional policing to primarily non-traditional community policing. There were also many people in the department who might not play a leadership role in the transition, but who cared, were energetic, and had the skills and abilities to lessen the distinction that existed between Metro and the citizens it serves. But most of all, they had the belief and hope that they could make a difference.

Las Vegas is no Mayberry. Television made it look easy, but what about reality? It is difficult, as Metro realized, to get back to the basics when dealing with a thriving, complex metropolis, as opposed to a fictitious small town. Despite the complexities of modern-day life,

members of Metro were fighting to get in touch with their community by knowing their neighbors and understanding their needs.

### **Postscript**

In the summer of 1993, the department abandoned its Line Solution Policing Program. The agency's leadership decided the special unit approach to community policing would never enable the department to fundamentally change the way it did business. At the time LSP was dismantled, department spokespeople indicated that the agency's ultimate goal was for all patrol officers to practice problem-oriented policing.

## Community-Oriented Problem Solving in Santa Barbara

By George Barrett  
Louisville Police Department

At well over six feet tall and weighing in at close to 250 pounds, Richard A. Breza is a large and commanding figure. As the chief of police of the Santa Barbara (California) Police Department, however, the impact of Breza's presence more than supersedes his girth and height. He is an individual with a vision, committed to effective leadership of the organization and possessing the political savvy to put his ideas into action. This style and approach to police work has taken the shape of Community Oriented Problem Solving or COPS in the Santa Barbara Police Department, although it is difficult to determine whether the approach to policing is more akin to generic community policing and problem solving principles or more the result of Breza's philosophical mentor, Tom Peters, who authored the popular book, In Search of Excellence. The book advocated such bold new management concepts such as risk taking at all organizational levels, a futures orientation, management contracts and the importance of team approaches to decisionmaking. Breza's commitment to the Peters' style is evident throughout the agency, from the language and stated ambitions of personnel, to the framed posters on the walls, carrying such euphemisms as "Aim High." Because of Breza's commitment to the concept, COPS has become a philosophy of policing in the Santa Barbara Police Department, an approach that is well-understood and articulated by personnel throughout the agency from dispatchers to line officers to investigations personnel. And although the path to his community policing goals is not complete, the story of its construction provides a useful blueprint for other police agencies.

## City of Santa Barbara

Santa Barbara is a crescent-shaped city nestled along the west coast of California. A ridge of mountains to the north of the city forms a protective wall. This strip of land between the coast and the wall of mountains has enjoyed a moderate climate and comfortable living conditions since before it was established as a Franciscan outpost in the late 18th century.

Growth of Santa Barbara has been steady and deliberate. In part because of its distance from Los Angeles, 100 miles to the south, and San Francisco, 330 miles to the north, the community has been spared the rapid growth of industry and suburban development that taxed other regions of the state. This stability allowed a comfortable upper social class to evolve by the early 20th century. A small downtown business district remains very much as it appeared in the 1920s. Residential growth has moved slowly towards the ridge of mountains to the north and along the coastal plain to the east and west.

Santa Barbara has a reputation of affluence -- its median housing price is \$300,000 -- but today there is another side to the city's economic fortunes. Per capita income in Santa Barbara is actually more than 5% below the state's average. To ensure a steady revenue source, the city has promoted tourism as a major industry. However, the drought which plagued California for over five years coupled with the generally high cost of living, has limited the number of tourists coming to the city for the past two years.

The population of Santa Barbara has steadily increased since 1960 -- growing 46 percent overall since 1960 and 15 percent in the decade from 1980 to 1990. Census data (see Table 1) reflects this steady growth:

**Table 1**

1960	58,768
1970	70,215
1980	74,414
1990	85,571
2000 (Projected)	96,731

Perhaps the most important dimension of Santa Barbara's growth is the rise in the city's Latino population. Although whites dominate the population, constituting 61 percent of the citizenry, Hispanics – most of Mexican descent – represent 30 percent of the city. Asians, Native Americans and black populations constitute the remainder of the population.

The growing Latino population of Santa Barbara has been recognized as an important factor in political decisions, social programs, budget planning, and staffing. It is widely believed that more undocumented Mexican immigrants are living in Santa Barbara than the census data reveals -- perhaps another 5,000 to 10,000. The city is also home to a large homeless community of up to 2,000.

The demands of the young and growing Latino population has created the need for Santa Barbara (and other California cities) to make major changes in providing education, social services, law enforcement, housing, and economic planning. Concurrently, competing interests and economic woes in the state legislature have produced profound changes in the allocation of resources. Initiatives for reduced state taxes and increased state programs have resulted in an increased share of the responsibility for government being assigned to counties and cities, necessitating the need for creative programs, efficient government, and increased private sector involvement.

## Santa Barbara City Administration

Breza and the Santa Barbara Police Department have had a receptive environment in which to implement change, partially because of strong support from the city administrator's office. Richard D. Thomas has been the city administrator of Santa Barbara for the past 16 years.

Santa Barbara adopted the council-mayor-city administrator form of government in 1967. Teamed with at-large elections of council members, a political hegemony exists which appears to serve the interests of the city's business community and status quo politicians. But the political winds in Santa Barbara may be changing. In 1990, an attempt was made to change the method of selection of the six-member council to a single-member system of voting; the measure was narrowly defeated by voters. However, this attempt to change the council selection process was attributed to efforts among the growing Hispanic community to gain more political influence in city government. One of the current council members is Hispanic; he was appointed to fill a vacancy. Despite his heritage, this member is viewed by some members of the Latino community as a part of the existing business community in Santa Barbara and not a representative of their views and concerns.

So far the Latino community has been unable to organize into a single recognizable group or to select a leader. The Latino voice is most often heard following an incident involving them in the community but seldom is it regarded as a consistent force to be included in decision making by administrators. Jesse Chavarria, a reporter who covers police related issues for the Santa Barbara daily newspaper, described the situation: "Latinos in Santa Barbara come together on immediate issues that touch them or their families; once the

matter is over, they go home." Thus, the leverage of the Latino community on politicians remains an issue for the future.

In 1992, voters also approved a referendum to limit the number of terms council members and the mayor could serve. Thus, the city's current mayor planned to leave office upon completion of her third four-year term and the city administrator planned to retire during 1993. New leadership may point the city in different directions, particularly as the city struggles to come to grips with demands placed upon services by the growing Hispanic population.

City Administrator Thomas and Chief Breza appeared to have a collegial relationship, with little political interference from elected officials visible to the casual observer. However, it is clear that efforts are made to proactively provide politicians with sufficient information in order to avoid overt political involvement. The absence of major crime events and a relatively stable level of crime in the community in recent years (See Table 2) contribute to the political equilibrium which appeared to exist.

**Table 2**

	1990	1991	1992	% increase
Murder	5	5	5	0
Rape	27	38	35	30
Robbery	131	151	163	24
Assault	471	480	489	4
Theft	3037	3015	3382	11

Excerpts from Santa Barbara Police Dept. 1990, 1991, 1992  
Crime Analysis Report dated 2/17/93

Despite the political equilibrium, city council and the administrator have maintained a strong interest in law enforcement over the years. The police department represents the



building, the department and its personnel appear well-appointed with state of the art equipment from communications and dispatching to late model and well-maintained squad cars.

Sworn personnel in the Santa Barbara Police Department are largely a well-educated lot. In a sample of patrol officers, 5 percent had only a high school diploma while 33 percent had a four-year college degree and an additional 10 percent had more education than a four-year degree.

In recent years, the department has made efforts to increase the representation of minorities at patrol level. However, the department had no minority or female officers above the rank of sergeant. The department's minority breakdown was as follows:

	White	Black	Latino	Asian	Female
Captain	3	0	0	0	0
Lieutenant	7	0	0	0	0
Sergeant	18	0	2	0	0
Officer II	40	1	12	1	3
Officer	31	2	6	2	4

One problem for the department has been the lack of Spanish-speaking officers on the department; it has not been unusual for officers to drive a Spanish-speaking secretary or calltaker out on an incident or call to translate. The department was planning to make a Spanish language and culture class for officers available in 1993 which would involve an emersion component in Mexico. Personnel are paid a small differential for Spanish language skills.

## Leadership

Breza joined the Santa Barbara Police Department in 1971 and rose through the department to captain. He was educated at the California Police Command College which he credits with giving him many of the ideas he later implemented.

As a captain, Breza admits he was strongly influenced strongly by many of the management concepts discussed by Peters. "The staff that I had at the time I became chief never had to take risks; most of them did not feel comfortable with this idea. As they left [the agency], I was able to promote officers who could work in this new environment," he said. Breza's staff now bears the mark of his influence: all of the agency's three captains and five lieutenants as well as 14 of 19 sergeants were promoted by Breza to their current positions and required to demonstrate a knowledge of community policing as part of the promotional process. Among senior command staff, only the deputy chief is a holdover from early administrations.

In his early years of mid-level management within the department, Breza was frustrated by the lack of interaction between the police department and the community. "A lack of interaction stemmed from both the department's traditional methods of policing and the fact that the department was doing its own thing with no significant involvement from the community," recalled Breza. The distance between police and community was abetted by the high cost of housing in the county which forced about 60% of the department's personnel to buy homes in other counties and commute to work. Many of the department's newer officers reportedly felt no tie to the city of Santa Barbara.

Under Breza's command, formal community policing efforts with a problem-solving

dimension began in the department about 1989. Earlier efforts related to community outreach were started in 1987. "The goal in community policing is working with the community to reduce the fear of crime," Breza says. Capt. Jeree Johnson described the transition to COPS as a process in which the Santa Barbara Police Department moved from a traditional agency prior to Breza to one that was involved in community policing in 1987. "Community policing idea was primarily a public relations concept that was largely driven at the time in Santa Barbara by issues involving the homeless. The department had become more image conscious and, at the same time, under Chief Breza was becoming more active in social and community issues," said Johnson.

But the move to community policing and problem solving was also motivated by efforts to increase the department's efficiency. "Officers were being called to the same locations four to six times in a night; they were handling calls for services all over the city, but not accomplishing anything," said Breza. "The problems were not being addressed so I decided that we should put one beat coordinator on each of our six beats. The old method of arresting someone to solve the problem was not working." For Breza, the beat coordinator approach represented a process in which police interaction with the community could be structured. After visits to nearby Oxnard, CA, and extensive reading and investigation, his staff recommended that the Santa Barbara department implement a beat coordinator position as a method to address community problems.

### **Operationalization of COPS**

A cadre of specialist officers was configured to supplement patrol officers for Santa

Barbara. The city is organized into six geographic beats. Patrol officers from the three watches are assigned to each beat and maintain primary responsibility for calls for service and patrol-related activity as well as involvement in addressing community problems.

Beat coordinators were selected in a competitive process and formally assigned to each of the six beats to coordinate problem solving efforts, particularly working with the community and accessing other resources. When possible Beat coordinators work with patrol officers using directed patrol and community resources to address specific problems. Beat coordinators routinely handle calls for service on a portion of their shift each day -- usually three hours of a ten-hour shift. This call-handling responsibility insures that the specialists do not become isolated from patrol concerns. Similarly, the department placed the beat coordinators with the patrol (operations) division to avoid the isolation that could trouble the special unit.

Beat coordinators attend many community meetings and meet with key people on their beat at least weekly. The close involvement of the beat coordinators in the community provides many residents and other agency officials a contact person when a problem or concern develops. Beat coordinators routinely solicit community input, occasionally using community surveys to develop a better understanding of specific problems. In addition, beat coordinators make themselves available to citizens, routinely distributing cards with their name and phone number.

Much of the beat coordinator's job is to coordinate resources. "I see myself as a resource and idea man," explained Officer Kim Fryslie, one of the department's six beat coordinators. "Getting the problem solved often involves me knowing who to call outside the

department. Having a good relationship means I can get things accomplished without a lot of delays."

One of the most demanding neighborhood problems involved garbage and trash remaining to be collected. Prior to COPS, the best efforts of the city simply involved the police department issuing parking tickets in a neighborhood to clear the street. This would be followed by the public works department coming through the neighborhood with street sweepers to clean the pavements.

Fryslie began with a neighborhood survey which provided advance notice that the city would be using Operation Clean Sweep in a neighborhood. The city would go into the neighborhood and clean the streets followed by the parks department which would trim trees and shrubs. A dumpster would be provided to allow residents the opportunity to clean their yards and houses. During the day the police department would host a cookout for the residents.

The new effort reduced the number of cars towed from the street, improve the effectiveness of the clean up, increasing the participation in cleaning up private property, and improving the image of the police department. When Operation Clean Sweep was implemented, it worked well with the city beautification program. As one example of how this program has worked is the continued effort in one neighborhood by residents to clean up the graffiti as it appears.

Another example of the department's focus on the importance of collaboration with other agencies is its "Crossroads" program. Crossroads is a creative multi-agency effort to involve youth in a graffiti eradication program through the development of artistic murals.

The program began as a problem-solving effort to address graffiti in the city.

To encourage problem solving throughout the department, supervision of beat coordinators was organized under the department's operations lieutenant and sergeant. The department currently uses a sergeant who was reassigned following the reorganization of several units. Sgt. Rich Abney oversees the beat coordinators. He views his role as the facilitator for this squad of officers. He manages the recordkeeping for the unit, works with the watch supervisors to include them in COPS, and provides training on problem solving to the department. The sergeant uses a 14-page COPS manual (plus forms) to guide the training of beat coordinators and other personnel. This document outlines key steps to be used by officers in addressing community problems. It is a model borrowed largely from the Newport News (VA) Police Department.

The department tracks problem solving using departmental forms, however, this process appears largely informal. Two forms available for documentation include a Problem Identification Interview form, to document information collected from citizen complaints, and a Problem Analysis Report, which documents initiation, supervisory approval and other elements of an officer's work. Problem solving files are not centralized nor are forms indexed. A directed patrol log is maintained by the Watch Commanders to record the patrol work directed at problems on the beats. Beat coordinators keep individual files on problems they are addressing, including such information as correspondence, crime analysis reports and the like.

Addressing problems, however, has not been restricted to the beat coordinators. "Although we were using beat coordinators as the focal point of COPS, everyone was

expected to do it, not just talk it," explained one police official.

Patrol officers receive training in community policing and problem solving from both formal and informal sources. Newly-hired officers receive training at the academy in subjects that touch on community policing and problem solving. When officers return to the department, they receive several more hours of training from the beat coordinators in problem solving. General training for veteran officers has consisted of:

- Roll call training video tapes
- Training bulletins received from the state or from other departments relating to COPS
- The department has issued one internal memorandum describing the department's COPS program
- One-on-one instruction provided to the patrol officers by the beat coordinators

This training is also supplemented by officers attending conferences throughout the state. Officers are expected to read on their own about community policing and problem solving. The most effective means of informing the patrol officers about COPS has been through their daily contact with the beat coordinators, according to Abney. Beat coordinators attend conferences, receive training in time management, public speaking, public presentations, and cultural awareness.

Training is also supplemented in other ways designed to enhance communication throughout the agency. For example, the department's monthly newsletter features the "Beat Coordinators Corner" and is written by the administrative sergeant. Communication is enhanced through information sharing. For example, call takers routinely attend briefings for each patrol shift in order to enhance sharing information about community problems. Similarly, efforts have been made to integrate community-based problem solving into every

part of the department. Even the investigations division has gotten involved in problem solving.

Lt. David McCoy, watch commander on the swing shift, believes patrol officers do engage in addressing problems. He cites an example in which a night spot in the city had for years created problems in the surrounding neighborhood. The major problem involved patrons leaving the tavern and urinating outside. One officer realized that the problem, in part, was that the tavern had only one restroom. He was able to have several portable restrooms put alongside the tavern, thereby providing patrons with a facility to use. This substantially reduced the number of complaints made by neighbors against the tavern.

Beat coordinators do routinely assist patrol offices in addressing problems. For example, Officer Jerry McBeth, an 11-year veteran of the department, was assigned to the swing shift. He viewed the COPS program as simply using community resources to solve problems in the community. He learned about the COPS program through working with one of the beat coordinators, 'Skip' Bond. McBeth and Bond worked on a problem involving community complaints stemming from loitering in one of the city parks. They had used directed patrol to move the men out of the park and reduce the complaints from the neighbors. Making traffic stops around the park was effective in discouraging this illegal or nuisance behavior.

Watch commanders receive a monthly summary of the problem solving efforts of beat coordinators. This is one of the primary means for informing officers on the progress of the department in problem solving. Beat coordinators also attend roll call and the department had recently implemented "beat boards," white boards in the briefing room in which beat

coordinators posted information, such as calls for service summaries, and queries about individual problems currently being addressed.

As a watch commander, Lt. Charlie Calkins views his role "as a balancing act, attempting to handle calls for service and COPS. COPS is not a comfortable component in the department but I prefer to handle it, rather than having it assigned [to me from] outside the operations unit," he said.

It is unclear the extent to which the department's focus on community policing and problem solving has overcome traditional resistance, largely based on officer workload. Despite the department's perceived success in implementing COPS, there is still a tension between recurring community problems and the call load on officers. "The patrol force is completely incident driven and the officers still regard their primary responsibility as responding quickly to runs," said Calkins.

Despite efforts to involve patrol officers in addressing problems, the department's major problem is the lack of beat integrity. According to Captain Edward Aasted, Operations Commander, officers at best spend 60% of their time on their beat; the other 40% is spent driving across the city, responding to calls. One study showed each officer was encumbered for 70% of their watch (SBPD Operations Division Audit, March, 1993). The department has struggled with an increasing call load: in 1971, there were 38,000 calls for service; in 1992, there were 125,000 calls for service – a 229 percent increase. Nonetheless, Aasted hopes that beat officers can engage in some problem solving during their shifts; if they cannot handle problems which they identify or if they are too busy on calls, they can work with the beat coordinator to address the problems.

Despite being busy on calls, at least some police officers engage in problem solving. For example, new beat coordinators are selected largely upon the basis of their participation in problem solving as patrol officers. For example, Officer Mike Aspland was selected in early 1993 as a beat coordinator. Aspland, who for the previous three years was a member of the Tactical Patrol Force (TPF), identified and addressed the problem of the labor line at 600 Anacapa Street. By competing to be available to prospective employers, workers awaiting daywork often leaped uninvited into the back of pickup trucks stopped at traffic signals disrupting the traffic flow. The workers also were creating concern at a day care center across from the labor line because they flowed into the center's parking lot. With input from other personnel, the idea of moving the labor line to another location several blocks away, out of the mainstream of the city was formed. This new location would minimize the disruptive nature of the group and would reduce the public concern about the workers.

Aspland's experience with the labor line problem was an example of his use of problem solving. During the oral interview process for the beat coordinator position, Aspland was able to describe his experiences as evidence of his work in addressing community problems. Competition for the specialty beat coordinators assignments was demanding -- like Aspland, candidates are expected to have both an understanding of problem solving and examples of how they have applied the concept.

In addition to the rigorous selection process for beat coordinators, the COPS initiative is supported through the use of a Problem Analysis Advisory Committee. This group occasionally meets on an ad hoc basis, primarily to support the problem-solving efforts of officers. The group may assist with brainstorming, identifying organizations with which

collaborative efforts can occur or in other ways facilitating the problem-solving efforts of an officer.

### **Changing the Organization**

Programmatic efforts related to the department's COPS initiative have not been segregated from the rest of the department. Since community policing and problem solving are viewed as both an organizational strategy and philosophy rather than a program, the department has used a variety of means, including various administrative approaches, to build the kind of police department embodied in its value statements and objectives, and representing the vision of its chief executive. The department has intentionally not used a strategic planning process to chart its direction, preferring the flexibility associated with a less structured approach. However, such methods as selection and training, promotion and performance review systems, and a career development or rotation plan have been designed to reinforce the primacy of community and problem-solving as the way in which police officers do their jobs in the city of Santa Barbara. For example, the police department has been able to select police recruits consistent with their goals and objectives. The police chief has the authority to approve or disapprove the top candidates for vacant positions during the final interview. During this process, he emphasizes the department's approach to community service and problem solving. Some candidates are rejected because of a discernable lack of understanding of community.

### **PROPOSED ENTRY LEVEL ORAL BOARD QUESTIONS**

- What do you know about the City of Santa Barbara's ethnic make up, crime rate and cost of living, as well as our method of policing?

- Do you understand the Santa Barbara Police Department is in partnership with the community to solve crime related problems as well as community problems?

- Solving problems often times invokes some risk taking. Give us some examples of problems that you have solved and the associated risk that you have taken?

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Proposed questions, December 7, 1991

"The type of people we're looking for has changed (over the years)," said the department's training sergeant. He acknowledged that the agency has tried to get local candidates "because they have a vested interest in the community" consistent with the department's.

Once selected, new officers attend a pre-academy training session. They are provided an overview of the police department and an emphasis is placed on the importance of community service and problem solving. Capt. Greg Stock explained that "with the chief's briefing, they go [off to the academy] with the attitude that we want them to be successful." The department contracts with other agencies for spots in appropriate training academies. The last academy that was used was a 22-week academy at the San Bernardino Sheriff's Department. Included in the fourth week of training was:

- 1 hour of Community Service
- 1 hour of Community Attitudes
- 1 hour of Citizens Evaluation of Law Enforcement
- 3 hours of Interpersonal Communications
- 13 hours of Cultural Awareness

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Course Schedule S.B.S.O. Training Center

Upon returning from the 22-week academy, new officers attend a three-day training program which includes a two-hour explanation of COPS. New officers then are assigned to

a field training officer (FTO). "The FTOs are expected to demonstrate problem solving and reinforce that this is the way we do business in Santa Barbara," explained one officer. The sergeant who supervises the beat coordinators is tasked with training FTOs in problem solving techniques and procedures as well as maintaining close contact with FTOs to insure consistency in training of new recruits.

Advancement within the department and assignment to specialized positions often includes an officer's understanding the principles of COPS and their being able to describe examples of how they are able to apply the problem solving process to their work. This technique is used throughout the department. For example, a narcotics sergeant and his team of detectives were preparing to serve a drug search warrant. In the past, the serving of the warrant would have taken an hour or so. Using the COPS approach, the narcotics officers included housing inspectors and code enforcement officers as a part of the process. When the warrant was served, and the suspects and drugs seized, the other agency inspectors cited the property owner for a long list of violations and boarded the property. This process lasted more than four hours, but effectively removed a recurring drug location from the neighborhood.

New officer evaluation forms were scheduled to be in place in 1993 to document officer involvement in problem solving and measure their understanding of COPS.

In addition to operational support for its COPS initiative, the department's commitment is reflected in its value statement, motto and mission statement. The agency's motto is "Dedicated to Serve" and its mission statement incorporates the following: "We are dedicated to high-quality community oriented police service...We believe in collaborative problem

solving with concerned citizens to identify ways of dealing with neighborhood problems, issues and activities..."

The department also changed the design of its badge and its patch, from a standard design common to the state to one unique to Santa Barbara, to promote pride and city identification. The department's logo uses the word, POLICE, spelling out the leading words in the department's value statements: **Pride, Objectivity, Leadership, Integrity, Commitment, Excellence.**

The department's career rotation plan engendered some resistance upon initiation. The plan involved the scheduled reassignment of officers every three years out of specialized assignments. Specialist positions, including those of the beat coordinators, receive salary differentials. Thus, one assignment to a specialty position does not insure that an officer will maintain a specialty position, classified as Officer II, but makes it likely that the selection process for these assignments will remain highly competitive. Clearly, the career development plan serves several different purposes, including exposing personnel to other responsibilities within the agency, including that of beat coordinator. Such exposure over the long run will provide most personnel with a deeper understanding of the job which the beat coordinators do in addressing community problems. The career development plan also changed the historical path to promotion within the department, away from the detective division and to include a variety of other assignments.

An example of a victim of the career development plan is Officer Bill Grzybowski, a veteran narcotics officer, who was unwillingly rotated to second watch in patrol as part of career development. Despite his concerns, Grzybowski has been able to apply his knowledge

of narcotics in combatting drug dealing on his beat. One week, he recognized a large drug operation taking place at a house in the Latino community on his beat. He arranged the following night to work in plainclothes with two other officers. They set up a roof-top surveillance on the location and made several arrests. While watching the drug house, Grzybowski noted prostitution taking place. He arranged to conduct a similar surveillance directed at the prostitution. Another night on patrol, Grzybowski was found standing on a corner in the downtown area of the city. He pointed out four heroin dealers standing across the street. He had noted them while driving through the area, parking his car and he stood across the street to halt their drug sales. This also sent a message to the dealers that he knew who they were what they were doing, and that it would not be tolerated.

The increased communication and exposure related to career development does not stop with line officers; supervisors have bought into the concept as well. For example, Lt. Calkins, a 25-year veteran of the Santa Barbara Police Department, rotated to the day shift to work as the day watch commander. Calkins had been working on the night shift for several years but decided to ask for the day work assignment because he wanted to get more involved in the COPS program. Calkins viewed the patrol force, particularly the night shift, as being "out of the loop on COPS." The department for years stressed problem solving by beat coordinators but placed little emphasis on patrol level problem solving. Calkins planned to rotate to the swing or mid watch in two or three months to get a broader view of the department and to pass on some of the ideas he has on policing and problem solving. Calkins' interest in changing shifts and learning more about was indicative of the ambitious and career-oriented environment which the police department has nurtured.

Other departmental efforts to support COPS are not programmatic. For example, risk taking in the Santa Barbara Police Department is considered to be "breaking with tradition and putting your reputation on the line -- and it starts at the top," explained one sergeant. Chief Breza has encouraged officers to develop innovative responses to community problems. Such responses are sometimes perceived as risky based on their potential for failure. Nonetheless, officers have accepted risk taking as part of "doing business" with the assurance that they will have the department's support, according to the chief and others within the agency.

For example, one recurring problem in Santa Barbara has been car cruising by youths which often involved Latino teenagers and young adults driving cars called "low riders" in the central area of the city. To address the problem and create a positive image, several officers suggested that the department modify an out-of-service police car into a legal version of a low rider. The low-riding police car, known as the "Cruiser," retained police equipment and markings with the addition of a custom paint finish of two murals: one of the local mission and one of RoboCop, the robot-like police officer made famous in two popular feature movies.

The "Cruiser" proved controversial both inside and outside the department. Many officers criticized it as a waste of time and money; many in the community viewed it as an insult to the Hispanic community. Nonetheless, the "Cruiser" earned support of the department managers and after its first six months of operation proved to be popular in the community.

Some patrol officers have also pursued problem solving efforts that were somewhat risky. Neil Sharpe, an 18-year veteran of the department, and Frank Mannix, an officer with

five years' experience, researched and proposed a Serious Habitual Offender (SHO) program for juvenile offenders. The SHO program, modeled after a 1986 Department of Justice study, involved tracking habitual serious youthful offenders through the criminal justice system. A juvenile, once identified and classified as a SHO offender, would receive more consistent and punitive treatment when arrested by the police department.

While working on a patrol shift, officers Sharpe and Mannix received approval to research the concept and began collecting information from other agencies to refine the idea for their community. From April until December 1992, they worked closely with the school system, juvenile prosecutors, and juvenile court system to develop the actual model to be implemented. While working on the SHO effort, both officers remained in the patrol division, actively handling a workload of calls for service.

The SHO idea became a subject of community concern in the Hispanic community which accused the department of labeling their children and of cultural bias in the application of the SHO program. These concerns necessitated the department making a series of presentations to explain the program and to develop support. Despite the community concerns, the chief and other police managers have supported the officers throughout the rocky implementation process.

### **Collateral Initiatives**

The department has developed and maintained a number of collateral efforts which helped to institutionalize COPS. For example, a citizens academy was designed and launched in 1991 to familiarize citizens in the community with policing and involve them in

some parts of the department. The citizens academy involved selected members of the community attended training sessions once a week for four months. Annett Carrell, who headed the citizens academy alumni group, explained, "We were targeted (to attend) as people active and visible in the town. We represented those people who had a 'mouth'....the academy increased citizens' awareness of police. Suddenly policemen are something else than just catchers (of criminals)." It is clear that there may be political benefits associated with the accumulated effects of the citizens' academy if the program enhances the appreciation of the police by the city's elites. Among those who have been selected to attend the Citizens Academy are a leader in the black community, local news media reporters and others. The academy includes a well-developed curriculum including riding one evening with a patrol officer.

Another program which has supported the department's community outreach effort has been the use of "trading cards," similar to baseball cards, which illustrate individual members of different units within the police department. The Santa Barbara Police Department's Tactical Patrol Force, crime prevention unit, beat coordinators, SWAT, canine unit and other personnel are featured in photographs on the cards. On the back of each card is basic information about the unit including the names of the officers and the mission of the unit. These cards have been popular with the youth in the community and help officers make positive community contacts.

In addition to the beat coordinator positions, the department also uses a number of other units to engage in addressing community problems. The Tactical Patrol Force mixes bicycle patrol, foot patrol, and plainclothes work to target problems in the downtown area of

Santa Barbara. The Traffic Unit uses the problem-solving approach as part of the Traffic Oriented Problem Solving (TOPS) program, designed to impact high accident areas of the city. TOPS involves using both directed enforcement and engineering changes to reduce the number and severity of accidents in the city. In addition, efforts closely related to COPS include the department's participation in Neighborhood Watch, Explorer Post, use of its Community Relations officer and senior volunteer program.

## Conclusions

Despite the emphasis on problem solving in Santa Barbara, the department has not lessened its focus on crime and traditional measures of police performance. In a random survey of line personnel, officers ranked number and quality of arrests, technical skills (such as report writing), citizen complaints and appearance as the most important factors used in their evaluations by supervisors. Involvement with the community, addressing problems and ability to relate to citizens were rated at half the level of the traditional performance measures. Nearly 60 percent of these personnel, however, felt their involvement with COPS affected their potential for promotion.

Members of the department quickly admit that they have not achieved all of their objectives related to community policing and problem solving. Chief Breza's goal is "having COPS implemented department-wide. It's about 65% there; in maybe three years it will be completely in place." He views continued community involvement and collaboration with other agencies as key to the success of COPS.

The COPS initiative is difficult to separate from the many other new programs,

directions and ideas used by the Santa Barbara Police Department. Ideas such as the Citizens Academy, TOPS (Traffic-Oriented Problem Solving), the officer trading cards, the "cruiser," and foot patrols probably would have been used by the department regardless of the programmatic development of the beat coordinators' positions. The management style of the current police administration has laid the groundwork for institutionalization of change and a more public approach to police work. For these reasons, the actual COPS program can only really be distinguished as consisting of the beat coordinator and the practice of problem solving as used by many police officers, while community policing and problem solving are clearly viewed as a philosophy and organizational approach to policing.

The department has made no effort to formally evaluate the impact of its COPS effort. The lack of a formal implementation plan makes an impact or process evaluation pointless. The measurement of success of the COPS program in Santa Barbara is difficult, much as it would be in any community. Police and a limited number of city leaders report that police are more open and accessible, and tout the improved results related to individual problem-solving efforts. The efforts of the Santa Barbara Police Department are clearly well intended, and well received by the city administration and by a large portion of the community. With an emerging Hispanic population which will gain influence and focus this decade, the department will be confronted with new issues to be addressed.

**The Evolution of Community Policing in Newport News**  
by Executive Assistant Chief Lynn Babcock  
Glendale, AZ, Police Department

Lt. Mo Mowry, a 26-year veteran of the Newport News Police Department and the head of the Property Crimes Unit, recently decided to take a different approach to addressing the daytime residential burglaries experienced by Newport News citizens. Based on past experience, Mowry knew that most of these types of burglaries occurred during the school year and he believed juveniles were responsible. To be certain, he carefully analyzed departmental data and determined that there was a correlation between juveniles who were not in school and a series of daytime break-ins in residential neighborhoods. He then identified juveniles who had skipped school during the first month after summer vacation, checked their criminal histories and began methodically creating a database of these individuals. The database included information on the juveniles' schools, grade levels and residences.

Now, whenever a daytime residential burglary is reported to the department, Mowry consults his database to identify previously truant juveniles who live in the neighborhood of the crime. A department detective then checks with school officials to determine whether any of the potential suspects did not attend all of their classes on the day of the burglary. (As a result of earlier research, Mowry had learned that truant juveniles often attend their first class so that they will be recorded in attendance for the entire day.)

Using a problem-solving model to address the burglaries, Mowry thoroughly analyzed the problem, and developed a response tailored to the problem based on his analysis. Although he had not formally assessed the impact of the response on the burglary problem, it appeared that clearance rates for the burglaries had gone up. Mowry was also convinced that

his database would be a deterrent to future burglaries, since the truant juveniles know he has cataloged their names, addresses and past histories.

That a detective would develop an innovative response to an ongoing crime problem was not unexpected in the Newport News Police Department. The department pioneered the development of a problem-solving model for police in 1984. Since then, the department has put into place a number of support mechanisms for its department-wide Problem-Oriented Policing (POP) initiative. These support mechanisms included the establishment of a Problem Analysis Advisory Committee (PAAC) to assist officers with POP projects; the addition of a problem-solving component to field training, as well as annual qualifying and promotional exams that include officers' knowledge of and experience with POP; and, the establishment of a specialty pay grade for those with excellent problem-solving skills.

Over the years, and with changes in the leadership of the department, both the concept and practice of POP have evolved in Newport News. By 1993, for many officers, the POP process had become an informal practice. For example, an officer who noticed that a loud nightclub had been the source of a large number of calls for service, might work with Alcoholic Beverage Control officials to tighten enforcement efforts at the location. In doing so, the officer might not use every step of a formal problem-solving model to analyze and address the problem; the officer might use the model in thinking through the problem and in developing a response. It is likely that such a process would not be formally documented. Various personnel at the police department estimated that 60% to 70% of the agency's officers now take this informal approach to problem solving, bypassing PAAC and other means of formal analysis and documentation.

vision of policing in Newport News. Jay Carey, the chief of police in Newport News from 1986 to 1994, believed that the police have to go beyond just solving problems and actually formalize community-police interaction. Under Carey's vision of policing in Newport News, called Neighborhood Policing, 24-hour responsibility for patrol areas was transferred from captains to lieutenants, and officers were assigned to smaller fixed geographic beats so that they could get to know citizens and neighborhood crime problems better. In his view, the implementation of Neighborhood Policing was the next logical evolutionary step of policing in Newport News.

### **The City of Newport News**

Newport News, a city of 175,000, is located in what is referred to as the Hampton Roads region of Virginia. Situated to the south and east of Richmond, the state capitol, Newport News is clustered among a group of medium-sized cities that make up a metropolitan area of about two million people. Located on a peninsula, the city is 22 miles long and 4 miles across at its widest point. The downtown area of Newport News is divided down the middle by a railroad and an interstate highway system, isolating the mostly African American residents of the Southeast community from businesses and government buildings located on the other side of the dividers.

Newport News has been one of the shipbuilding centers for the nation for many years. At one time, over 30,000 workers were employed in various shipbuilding facilities in Newport News. Between 1989 and 1993, however, the shipyard laid off 6,000 workers, and the local unemployment rate rose from four to seven percent. In an effort to be less

dependent on the shipbuilding industry, the city of Newport News has been working to attract several more large companies to the city. While the largest industry in Newport News is blue collar, the majority of the residents (66%) hold white collar jobs. Blue collar workers make up the remaining 34% of workers. Per capita income is \$16,000, and the median household income for city residents is \$37,535<sup>1</sup>.

Like many communities across the country, Newport News was adversely impacted by the national recession that took place in the early 1990s. Beginning in 1991, the city implemented an austerity program meant to minimize discretionary expenditures and also significantly reduce capital expenditures. Despite the need for the austerity program, the overall economic condition of the city remained sound; Newport News consistently maintained Aa and AA- bond ratings from Moody's Investor Services and Standard and Poor's during the late 1980s and early 1990s. During the same period, the city experienced slow economic growth that paralleled its slow, but steady, population growth.

The city is demographically diverse. Sixty-two percent of Newport News residents are white, 33% are African American, 3% are Hispanic, and 2% are Asian. Police department personnel are somewhat less diverse: eighty percent of the agency's sworn employees are white, 17% are African American, 2% are Hispanic and 1% are Asian. The department has two distinct patrol divisions: north and south. Seventy-three percent of the citizens in North Patrol are white, and a majority of the citizens in South Patrol are black.

The Newport News city government fared well in a 1989 survey of city residents. Residents were generally content with the services received from various city departments.

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Office of Public Information and Community Relations, City of Newport News Performance Report, 1991, p. 14.

Garbage collection ranked the highest of services provided by the city. The police department also received positive ratings in the survey.

The police department has all of the concerns and headaches of most large police departments around the country. Assistant Police Chief Joe Gaskins attributes some of the increase in the city's crime statistics, particularly crimes of violence, to the migration of drug dealers and gang members to Newport News from cities to the north.

The department has a uniformed strength of nearly 300, which equates to an estimated 1.7 officers per 1,000 population, but personnel throughout the agency acknowledge staff limitations in handling calls for service. The department's call load went up significantly in the late 1980s and early 1990s. In 1988, the department received just under 260,000 calls for service; by 1993, it received over 325,000 -- an increase of 25%. Department officials attributed the increase in calls to greater vigilance by Crimewatch, a community crime prevention organization, increased citizen fear levels and a steady growth in population.

### **Problem-Solving Support Structure**

In March 1983, Darrel Stephens became the first Newport News chief of police to be appointed from outside the department. Stephens' appointment followed a study by an outside consultant that recommended a laundry list of changes to strengthen the administration of the department. The study was commissioned by the city manager, who was concerned about reports of officers using excessive force and inappropriately using firearms.

Soon after Stephens took the helm, the department began developing a new set of policies and procedures. While the main goal was to update operating procedures that were

over a decade old and often in conflict with the general orders manual, the department was also preparing for accreditation, which was achieved in March of 1986.<sup>2</sup>

Many operational changes occurred in the agency during Stephens' tenure. During 1983 and 1984, the department eliminated weekly rotating shifts in favor of fixed, 12-month shifts; set up a field training officer program; doubled the amount of in-service training, from 40 hours biannually to 40 hours each year; implemented a new performance evaluation system that included an annual qualifying exam; and, adopted a college requirement for promotion to supervisory and management positions. All of these changes were implemented with the goal of professionalizing the department.

These changes were accomplished with a dramatic change in the management style of the department. Stephens established committees that allowed greater input into decision making processes and encouraged thinking that was "outside of the lines." During this period, the Newport News agency also participated in a policing experiment funded by the National Institute of Justice and carried out with assistance from the Police Executive Research Forum of Washington, D.C. Initially framed as a crime analysis experiment, the project was intended to improve the effectiveness of patrol officers by helping them focus on developing solutions to recurrent problems manifested as repeat calls for service.

Under the problem-oriented policing project, an eleven-member task force composed of sworn and civilian employees at all ranks developed and implemented a problem-solving model for the department. This task force was responsible for beginning a variety of initiatives that provided structural support to problem solving in Newport News. In brief,

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John E. Eck and William Spelman, Problem-Solving Problem-Oriented Policing in Newport News, PERF: 1987, p. 35.

these initiatives included:

**The Development of a Problem Solving Model.** With assistance from experts such as Herman Goldstein, a professor of law at the University of Wisconsin, and Barry Poyner, a British crime prevention expert, the task force developed a four-step problem-solving model and an extensive guide for assisting officers in analyzing problems. The guide helped officers to systematically apply the model to crime and community problems, through the use of a checklist and a formula for action.

**The Provision of Training.** All supervisors above the rank of sergeant received 32 hours of training in problem-solving and related issues. Nineteen patrol officers and detectives also received training.

**The Establishment of the Problem Analysis Advisory Committee.** The PAAC, which ultimately replaced the task force, was established to assist officers and other employees in evaluating and responding to problems. The committee, which has a rotating captain as its chair, meets once a month to review problems currently being worked on by department employees. Projects are reviewed most frequently during the initial problem-solving steps. The committee tracks POP projects to avoid duplication of efforts and allow for assessments of project results. Committee members are from all ranks in the department and serve for a period of one-year. PAAC meetings are open and serve as a mechanism for spreading information about problem solving throughout the department.

**The Revision of Personnel Evaluations and Promotional Exams.** Questions to assess an employee's knowledge and practice of problem solving were added to promotional exams and performance appraisals. Among qualified candidates vying for promotion, those

who supported and practiced POP principles got promoted.

**The Designation of a POP Coordinator.** The department designated one person to track problem-solving efforts, provide administrative support to the PAAC chair and maintain POP project files. Before becoming chief in 1986, Carey served as the POP coordinator. Later, POP coordinator Linda Swope, a lieutenant, spent about 15% to 20% of her time on POP-related work, also serving as the accreditation manager for the department.

Prior to the establishment of the task force, the department had begun assessing calls for service with regard to the need for a police response, and prioritizing those that required an officer. Calls that did not require an officer, such as those regarding larcenies and cold burglaries, were handled over the telephone by community service officers. The department ultimately increased the number of calls handled through telephone reporting from 10 to 35%.

These structural support mechanisms are still in place nearly 10 years after many were implemented. Several others have been added over the last decade. Officers and supervisors must now demonstrate knowledge of problem solving to pass the annual qualifying exam, a yearly test on which officers must demonstrate their knowledge of policies and procedures. Between 25 and 40 questions on the 100- to 150-question tests involve POP. Field training officers must also have knowledge of POP and participate in POP activities to be selected for this assignment. A specialty position with a rank between officer and sergeant called master police officer (MPO) was created in 1986 to recognize officers who had problem-oriented policing skills and practiced problem solving, or had expertise in other areas of the department, such as field training. MPOs receive additional

pay. The department also stopped requiring officers to fill out monthly activity reports that tallied such traditional measures of policing as summonses issued, arrests made and accidents investigated. The monthly reports now cover progress on POP projects, enumerate neighborhood concerns, and describe contacts between police, citizens and crime prevention organizations. No standardized format is used to draft the reports.

### **Trend Toward Informal Problem Solving**

Although a number of structural support mechanisms for formal problem solving efforts are in place in the agency, many department employees do not routinely practice and document formal problem solving as it was developed in the 1980s. Both those employees who have been involved in POP since 1984, as well as officers who have come to the department since the inception of problem-solving indicated that the process has become much more "informal" over the last decade.

Carey agreed that the formal POP model is not now used on a regular basis by department employees. Carey believed the problem-solving principles had become second nature to police employees in Newport News. Although most officers do not document problem-solving activities, they routinely apply an analytical approach to crime problems because problem solving has become ingrained in the way the department does business.

In contrast, one sergeant said that most problem-solving was being done by the same group of individuals who were working on problems when the study began in 1984. Capt. Janice Thurman, an original member of the task force put together by then-Chief Stephens, said "there is a core group of people who know what problem-solving means and use it." She

added that those who aren't in the core -- which she estimates numbers around 12 people -- "pay lip service to it."

"All of the good POP projects have been done," suggested one a patrol sergeant, as a reason why few officers have undertaken full-blown POP projects in recent years. (Fifteen active POP projects were on file at the time of our site visit.) Downtown prostitution and a variety of other major crime and disorder problems had been addressed since 1984, leaving the smaller, less glamorous problems, such as street corner larcenies, for officers to deal with, the sergeant indicated.

Some officers appeared to be involved in the formal documentation of problem solving primarily to meet the requirements for promotion or transfer. One officer with over three years on the department began documenting his problem-solving efforts via the PAAC so that he would be eligible for the MPO rank. MPO candidates must have participated in a POP project sometime during the previous three years to be promoted to that rank.

Others in the department said that the paperwork requirements of the formal POP process are basically anathema to most police officers. Lt. Mowry, although a strong proponent of the formal POP process said, "The police officer's nightmare is paperwork." Assistant Chief Joseph Gaskins argued that "using POP has to be a natural process. If it's not natural, it bogs people down." Administrative personnel frequently review the problem-solving structure to determine ways of making the process more user friendly.

Swopes (the POP coordinator) worries, however, about the consequences of informal POP practices. She says that those who undertake problem-solving efforts without participating in the PAAC process do not get the benefit of feedback on efforts and

interaction with command personnel with respect to problem solving. She was also troubled by the prospect that informal problem solvers tackling complex problems might abbreviate or skip steps in the problem-solving model if they do not think through and document actions taken under each step. In addition, Stephens (the former chief) said the informal approach often leads to officers applying previously used solutions to similar-sounding problems, which can result in ineffective responses.

### **Neighborhood Policing**

The primary impetus for the department's adoption of Neighborhood Policing came from Carey, according to command staff, city government officials and members of the media. Carey, along with Gaskins, believed that Newport News community members wanted more involvement with city government and the police department. Yet, at the same time, Gaskins believed that many citizens were not even comfortable speaking with police officers they met on the street. Citizen activist Katherine Grayson agreed, "The community is starving for interaction," she said. No particular incidents precipitated the department's move to Neighborhood Policing. No racial incidents, cases of police misconduct, or instances of unnecessary use of force appear to have led the community to request more input into police department operations.

Carey also felt that a flattening of the department's organizational structure caused by two early retirement programs, as well as a forced reduction in management-level positions - the ranks of major and deputy chief were eliminated -- created the opportunity for the move to Neighborhood Policing. Changing crime conditions in the city may also have set the stage

for implementing Neighborhood Policing. Crime Analyst Lynn Flint indicated that crime was no longer concentrated in pockets of the city, which made it less effective for police to target significant resources in just a few areas. However, one manager in the department believed that the implementation of Neighborhood Policing reflected Carey's attempt to "put his name on something."

In 1989, Carey formed a study group composed of police employees at all ranks and from all sections of the department to determine the needs associated with implementing his vision of Neighborhood Policing. Carey convened the group because the department had previously been successful in utilizing committees to make operational changes. This committee and several other internal entities evaluated the need for goals and objectives; mini-station sites; and, new policies and procedures related to the move to Neighborhood Policing.

Carey also contracted with Robert Wasserman, a consultant, to develop a model department personnel could use to determine how much uncommitted time patrol officers had each day. Carey believed that in order for officers to have time to work with the community to solve problems, at least 50% of their shift would need to be uncommitted. The study revealed that, depending on the shift and time of day, only 30% to 40% of the officers' time was not occupied by calls for service, directed patrol or other assigned duties. Based on the uncommitted time survey and the work of the committee, the department submitted a three-year budget request of approximately \$1,000,000 to the city council in 1990. Department officials indicated that these monies would provide the agency with the personnel, equipment and substations they felt were needed to implement Neighborhood Policing in the North

Patrol area. The budget plan proposed giving more responsibility, with respect to the delivery of police services in North Patrol, to captains, lieutenants, sergeants and officers by holding them accountable for citizen satisfaction. The package did not receive funding that year, despite the department's efforts to educate city officials about the benefits of Neighborhood Policing. According to Assistant City Manager Bill Mitchell, the proposal was not funded because of the poor financial condition of the city at the time. The council also rejected the budget package the following year, stating the same financial concerns.

While Chief Carey had little luck getting the Neighborhood Policing budget package past the council in 1990 or 1991, public pressure following a series of sexual assaults during the same time period in the predominantly African American southeast community, may have stimulated the council to approve the hiring of new officers. In this instance, the police department did not communicate seven related incidents of molestation of young girls to Crimewatch, and were publicly criticized for not alerting the community. Around the same time, the council approved the hiring of more than 40 police officers over a two-year budget period from 1992 to 1993. The first new officers began in the summer of 1992.

Although the department did not receive the full amount of funding Carey felt was necessary to move ahead with Neighborhood Policing, the department began gearing up for the change anyway, beginning in the North Patrol area. (The North Patrol area, which encompasses roughly the northern two-thirds of the city's land mass, was selected as the pilot implementation area because it received fewer calls for service than South Patrol and was less densely populated. The command staff believed it would be easier to work out any bugs in the implementation of Neighborhood Policing in North Patrol before implementing the

concept in South Patrol.)

In the summer of 1991, following the failure of the 1992 budget proposal, Carey transferred several lieutenants to North Patrol. Along with the captain of North Patrol, these lieutenants were given the assignment of implementing Neighborhood Policing in that area. Lacking additional funds for any changes, Carey simply told his staff to "be creative," and to aim for implementing Neighborhood Policing in North Patrol some six months later.

The lieutenants stationed in the North Patrol area turned over much of the responsibility for planning for Neighborhood Policing to committees made up of sergeants, MPOs and patrol officers working in the patrol area. Each committee evaluated and suggested changes in beat boundaries, job descriptions, the bid shift system and other pertinent areas that would be affected by the move to Neighborhood Policing.

To determine new boundary lines for beats, the crime analysis unit began evaluating data concerning neighborhood boundaries gathered by the committees along with computer-aided dispatch data. A primary objective of the new boundaries was to keep "neighborhoods" intact. Once all the data had been analyzed, boundaries were drawn and a new officer call number system was instituted to designate each employee's shift, beat location and patrol area.

A new bidding process for shifts was also implemented. Previously, officers had bid for shifts every year; under the new system, officers bid for shifts only once every three years. The purpose of this change was to keep officers in specific areas for longer periods of time, allowing them to get to know citizens and problems in their beats. Various committee members also began attending roll-call briefings and working group meetings to bring other

employees up to date on implementation activities.

One of several committees that had been organized for the first stage of implementation was the community involvement committee. Made up of officers and supervisors from the North Patrol area, this committee was charged with exploring ways community members could contribute to problem solving under Neighborhood Policing. The committee suggested establishing community involvement teams (CITs), advisory boards composed of community leaders that would help the department set priorities for police services in North Patrol. As originally conceived, there would be six CITs -- one for each of the new patrol areas. CIT meetings would provide an avenue for lieutenants and officers to hear citizens' priorities firsthand. In the past, citizens frequently took their concerns directly to city council members, bypassing members of the police department. A list of recommended community leaders for the CITs was forwarded to the Carey, who later extended an invitation to these citizens to join the effort. The area commander for North Patrol followed-up with the new participants to emphasize the department's interest in the community leaders becoming part of the CITs.

However, several members of the department felt that community members had little real involvement in the planning phase of the move to Neighborhood Policing. These department officials were told by the chief that he did not think it was appropriate for the community to play a significant role in the internal planning process.

Neighborhood policing officially began in North Patrol on April 1, 1992. On this date, lieutenants in North Patrol became responsible for one of three geographical patrol areas. Prior to April 1, North Patrol had been divided into seven patrol areas or districts

based on workload indicators. Each patrol area had three watches, with each watch managed by a lieutenant with assistance from two or three sergeants. Captains had been in charge of each patrol area, North and South.

Lieutenants enthusiastically greeted the change. Said one, "It's like running your own little police department." The lieutenants became more active in community meetings, handling complaints and concerns that would have normally gone directly to the chief of police. They also became more accessible to the public, and began making most of the community contacts that captains or the chief had made in the past.

Lieutenants reported that officers took on more responsibility and acquired a sense of beat ownership as a result of Neighborhood Policing. "The officers will try to get a problem in their beat corrected before their sergeant finds out about it," said one lieutenant. Yet, with respect to their day-to-day responsibilities, many patrol officers and sergeants felt little had changed with the implementation of Neighborhood Policing. For example, one officer said the main change he noticed with the implementation of Neighborhood Policing was that some of his call numbers changed to letters.

To help ensure a smooth transition in the implementation of Neighborhood Policing in South Patrol, which was scheduled for October 1, 1992, North and South Patrol lieutenants met regularly during the planning and implementation phases of the move to Neighborhood Policing in North Patrol. Through this involvement, South Patrol personnel were kept updated on the progress in North Patrol, while North Patrol personnel benefitted from the input of South Patrol personnel.

A memorandum was sent to patrol officers delineating the new beat boundaries and

announcing the implementation of Neighborhood Policing in North Patrol. Other than this directive, little about the change was communicated to personnel in the department. Said one mid-level manager, "I don't think anybody's ever come out and said what we expect to gain [from Neighborhood Policing]."

Most department employees were aware of the move to Neighborhood Policing, but were confused about how it related to the department's problem-oriented approach to policing. Employee definitions of Neighborhood Policing included:

- "asking people to help identify problems"
- "a spin-off of POP"
- "going to community meetings, getting out of the patrol car"
- "smaller precincts throughout the community"
- "breaking down the 'us vs. them' mentality"
- "pushing the responsibility and accountability for the delivery of police services to the lieutenant level"

Some command staff were also unclear as to the specific direction Carey had in mind for Neighborhood Policing, and they made him aware of their concerns. Carey indicated that he planned to clarify the goals and direction of the effort. With respect to internally communicating his view to command staff, Carey said that the implementation of Neighborhood Policing was a standing item on the weekly management committee meetings.

Training in Neighborhood Policing was not provided to patrol officers until April 1993, which may have contributed to some of the confusion surrounding the goals and purpose of the change. The training, which lasted eight hours, presented the general rationale

for Neighborhood Policing: namely, that it would enable police personnel to get to know community members better, develop a better understanding of community problems and instill in officers a sense of ownership of geographic areas. The training also covered problem-solving techniques, the relationship of crime analysis to Neighborhood Policing and community engagement skills. Finally, the training addressed what the community could expect of the police, and vice versa, as a result of the change. Additional future training blocks were to cover cultural issues as they related to Neighborhood Policing.

### **The Community's Role**

Community leader Katherine Grayson, who became involved in public safety issues after forming a grassroots community crime watch, first heard about Neighborhood Policing during a police-community meeting at which citizens were told that the police department would be moving in this direction. To obtain more information about Neighborhood Policing and other police department initiatives, she made appointments with several high-ranking department officials. At these meetings, she was informed about the existence of the city's "Framework for the Future," a master plan for the city of Newport News. The plan had been created from concept papers that were developed by staff in each city agency, and then reviewed by citizens. Delineated in the master plan were such police department goals as improving citizen cooperation, communication and involvement with police; increasing police visibility and familiarity in the neighborhoods they patrol; and, increasing police staffing.

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Grayson agreed with the joint community-police responsibilities outlined in the plan, but felt that the police were merely presenting their viewpoints at community meetings,

rather than "probing the community" for ideas and concerns that would lead to true community involvement. She felt that the police were also missing opportunities to educate the community about the possibilities of Neighborhood Policing. She believed the department should market its programs through the electronic media and encourage officers to become more involved in positive, high-profile activities, such as a dinner for the homeless that had been attended by several members of the department.

Other citizens echoed Grayson's perceptions of limited police involvement in the community. Annie Mae Williams, chairperson of one of the neighborhood crime watches in southeast, knew two of the officers who patrolled her neighborhood by name, but said that most people in her area were afraid of the police, and as a result, did not have a great deal of contact with them. She realized that the department could not maintain a constant presence in her neighborhood, but wished there was more police-community interaction. She was hopeful that, in 1993, "the police department and neighborhood could really get together and just sit down and talk." Williams praised the department for participating in a recent neighborhood clean-up. During that initiative, the police chief and other city officials worked alongside local residents as they picked up debris from the neighborhood.

Williams, who was 64 years old and still held down a full-time job, became a crime watch chairperson in the mid-1980s. She had a hole in her kitchen wall from a bullet that passed through her front door. She believed that the bullet may have been related to her neighborhood activism with respect to drug dealers and crack houses. She had been working with out-of-state landlords to destroy abandoned houses used to sell drugs. She said that the city quickly took action when the neighbors made them aware of problem locations. She also

said that drug dealers seemed to stay one jump ahead of the city as they moved from one run-down house to the next.

### **Anti-Crime Partnership Program**

In late 1992, Newport News was awarded an Anti-Crime Partnership Program Grant through the Virginia Governor's Office. While not specifically a part of the move to Neighborhood Policing, the grant provided the department with additional community-oriented resources. Specifically, the grant funds were to be used to help unite police and city services, schools, utilities and the housing authority to improve the quality of life in the southeast community, as well as decrease the fear of crime in southeast neighborhoods. The grant provided monies for the hiring of officers to address problems in the target areas. It also provided resources to combat problems related to parks and recreation, community services and libraries.

### **Barriers to Neighborhood Policing**

Several internal and external barriers appeared to inhibit progress with respect to the implementation of Neighborhood Policing in Newport News. In addition to the training and communication concerns described earlier, the department struggled with other issues.

Some of Carey's top managers were still loyal to past approaches to policing practiced by the department. For example, one police manager said, "If POP is done right, you don't need Neighborhood Policing." However, while some managers might have resisted the change, they did not actively block the implementation of Neighborhood Policing.

Another barrier to Neighborhood Policing was the lack of encouragement of officers by supervisors to engage in problem solving. Line officers throughout the department believed that the amount of problem solving done by officers on any particular squad was almost directly dependent on the sergeant's level of interest in and support of POP. If the sergeant or lieutenant supported the problem-solving process and mentored the patrol officers, officers would identify and work on problems. However, if the support was not forthcoming, the officers would do little in this regard. It was estimated that few supervisors strongly supported problem-solving efforts. "There aren't that many sergeants who understand POP and give a damn about it," lamented one first-line supervisor. Sergeants had also seen few changes as a result of the implementation of Neighborhood Policing. Because their understanding of the new approach was limited, their ability to communicate expectations relating to the change was impeded.

An additional factor that inhibited Neighborhood Policing was the frequency of "cross dispatching." Sergeants mentioned that a shortage of patrol officers resulted in the dispatching of calls from one section of North Patrol to officers in a different section of North Patrol. Many sergeants and patrol officers felt that the frequent practice of cross dispatching made it difficult, if not impossible, for the officers to get to know the people in their beat and concentrate on their concerns.

Although officers were assigned to a geographical area under Neighborhood Policing, detectives were not, which was considered a drawback by several persons in the department. One captain indicated that this lack of integration was a tough issue that had also been a concern when the department implemented POP. Cooperation between investigators and

patrol officers was one of the official 1993 goals and objectives for the department.

Trust levels between members of the community and the police department were not high, which may have also inhibited the implementation of Neighborhood Policing. Some officers believed that many in the community were too fearful of retribution by criminals to become involved in Neighborhood Policing efforts. In addition, the relationship between the department and the *Daily Press*, a newspaper that covers the metropolitan Newport News area was somewhat antagonistic. It appeared that the newspaper did little in the way of promoting the department's Neighborhood Policing efforts.

The reporter and editor who covered the police beat were alternately bored with or suspicious of the departments efforts in the realm of problem-oriented policing and Neighborhood Policing. The editor admitted that the newspaper had not reported the move to Neighborhood Policing because the topic was "bland" and lacked appeal. The reporter believed that problem solving was a reactionary, and ultimately temporary, police response to crime. During the six months after she was hired in July 1992, the department's public information officer concentrated her efforts on improving police-press relations in general, rather than on marketing Neighborhood Policing to the media and the community. Ironically, the department appeared to be better known for its innovative work on problem-oriented policing at the national level than within the city itself.

Even though Newport News had been practicing problem-oriented policing for 10 years, many of the nontraditional approaches that accompanied the philosophy, such as a delayed police response in non-emergency cases, were still not fully supported by the public, and consequently, by elected officials. Many city officials and the members of the

