

INDEPENDENCE  
MISSOURI POLICE  
DEPARTMENT

# Policing Strategy: The Need for Change

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## Independence Police

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## Introduction

*If disorder goes unchecked, a vicious cycle begins. First, it kindles a fear of crime among residents, who respond by staying behind locked doors. Their involvement in the neighborhood declines; people begin to ignore rowdy and threatening behavior in public. They cease to exercise social regulation over little things like litter on the street, loitering strangers, or truant schoolchildren. When law-abiding eyes stop watching the streets, the social order breaks down and criminals move in...if the first broken window in a building is not repaired, then people who like breaking windows will assume that no one cares about the building and more windows will be broken. Soon the building will have no windows...*

Wilson & Kelling, 1982

The City of Independence is known as a historic, safe, and livable city situated in proximity to attractions and conveniences desired by businesses and residents. Crime and disorder must be addressed to avoid deterioration similar to what is described in the quote above. No city is immune to such threats, so efforts must be undertaken to maintain the character of Independence.

The Independence, Missouri Police Department recognizes the need to change the policing strategy to combat crime and disorder by increasing accessibility to police officers and developing strategies to achieve sustainable results. This conclusion has arisen based upon an examination of facts regarding crime and disorder trends and the state of the department and its resources. The challenges faced by the department, to be examined in further detail throughout this document, include the following:

- Other municipalities throughout the metropolitan area have increased police resources, displacing crime and disorder and increasing concerns about encroaching violent crime in Independence
- The police department's resources are limited and insufficient
- Inadequate levels of supervision and support personnel have resulted in police employees being required to perform multiple functions which divert them from their primary duties
- Grants for personnel and equipment are dwindling due to the national economic downturn
- Increasing social and disorder-related issues within Independence
- Independence leads the metropolitan area in property crime rates
- Indicators of violent crime, including drive-by shootings and officer-involved shootings, are on the rise
- Concerns about the infiltration of criminal street gangs in the community
- An increased number of sex offenders within the City limits

- Additional responsibilities have taxed existing resources, including homeland security and cyber crimes

The police department has sought to reduce crime and disorder and maximize its efficiency through several measures, including intelligence-led policing, problem-solving policing, department restructuring and the utilization of more civilian personnel (civilianization), and the use of technology.

An in-depth internal study of department operations concluded that if additional resources are provided to the department, the most effective use of those resources would be to implement a strategic policing plan focusing upon the use of intelligence-led policing, problem solving and a supervised team approach dedicated to areas of command. This can be facilitated by adding manpower resources and providing the public more direct access to contact the police for problem-solving, non-emergency response and crime reporting through:

- “Area Command” liaison officers
- Station-based officers
- Online, email, and telephone contacts

**SECTION I**  
**POLICING CHALLENGES**

## **Policing Challenges**

### *Background*

Independence, Missouri is the fourth largest city within the state of Missouri. The Independence Police Department serves a 78 square mile jurisdiction with a population of 116,830 in the heart of the country.

Independence's population is comprised of 85.7% White, 5.6% African American, 1% Asian, 0.6% American Indian and Alaskan Native, 0.7% Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, with 3.2% persons reporting two or more races and 7.7% of persons of Hispanic or Latino origin (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).

The Independence Police Department is the second largest police department in Jackson County, with the Kansas City, Missouri Police Department being the largest within the State. Independence currently employs 204 commissioned police officers.

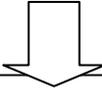
### *Crime and Disorder Displacement*

Approximately 35% of Independence borders the city of Kansas City, Missouri, and as a result shares similar types of crimes, often committed by the same offenders. Due to the size differences of the organizations, the Kansas City Police Department staffing allows for the formation of various units to address crime and disorder that Independence is unable to staff. Approximately 44% of subjects booked in Independence (processed at the Independence Police Department Detention Facility) are not residents of the city. Of the 44% non-residents booked, approximately 25% reside in Kansas City, Missouri (Dachenhausen, 2011).

The western border of Independence is positioned directly next to Kansas City's highest crime area, northeast Kansas City. For years, this area of Kansas City, Missouri has held the highest crime rate and level of violent activity in their city. Recently, Kansas City Police Chief Darryl Forte directed a large number of officers into this area to address the increasing crime (see Appendix A).

The recent crime statistics below reflect that the Kansas City Police Department's East Patrol Division (EPD) leads the city in nearly all crime categories.

## Crime by Division 2011



	CPD	EPD	MPD	NPD	SCPD	SPD	Total
Aggravated Assault	547	806	525	77	98	193	2,246
Simple Assault	1,518	1,518	1,245	415	544	730	5,970
Intimidation	111	113	109	49	69	84	535
Sex Offenses - Forcible	110	143	103	36	39	51	482
Sex Offenses - Nonforcible	5	17	4	4	2	4	36
Robbery	540	543	340	57	41	143	1,664
Burglary	911	2,173	1,803	288	418	1,052	6,645
Stealing	4,652	3,445	2,667	1,566	1,668	1,730	15,728
Stolen Auto	944	1,038	605	200	292	301	3,380
Property Damage	1,286	1,345	843	459	459	544	4,936
Narcotics	1,001	735	546	95	199	231	2,807
Prostitution	60	60	0	10	22	9	161
Weapon Law Violations	164	128	100	7	8	39	446
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,849</b>	<b>12,064</b>	<b>8,890</b>	<b>3,263</b>	<b>3,859</b>	<b>5,111</b>	<b>45036</b>

A concern of the Independence Police Department is what impact the concentrated policing efforts occurring in east Kansas City will have on the community of Independence. It is not uncommon for concentrated policing efforts to displace crime into neighboring jurisdictions, as criminals attempt to avoid detection and apprehension.

Bordering municipalities, including the cities of Blue Springs, Lee's Summit, and Raytown, have all passed public safety taxes and increased budgets devoted toward addressing police services. Crime displacement tends to flow toward areas where policing cannot keep up with demands.

### *Limited Resources*

The City of Independence worked in conjunction with Berkshire Advisors, Incorporated to conduct an audit of police department resources in 2008. The results of the study indicated that the police department requires more resources, including significant manpower increases, to effectively police the city. A citizen's advisory board, formed by the City Council in 2010, came to the same conclusion. The final report can be located here:

<http://www.ci.independence.mo.us/userdocs/homepage/PublicSafetyTaskForceReport-Final.pdf>

According to a 2008 article published in *Public Budgeting & Finance*, "Many local governments today are experiencing revenue shortfalls, especially in the critical area of emergency management where expectations exceed revenue realities. Emergency management systems are subject to rising costs, unfunded mandates, and greater service expectation"

(MacManus & Caruson, 2008). The City of Independence is not immune to this trend. In light of these challenges, the Independence Police Department continues to develop strategies to work more effectively and efficiently with the resources available. Over the past several years, the department has re-organized and civilianized several positions formerly held by commissioned officers.

The current manpower is overly stretched causing concerns such as delayed response times to emergency situations and the ability to prevent crime and disorder. Efficiencies have been maximized. Due to the economic conditions of the last several years, the department has become very familiar with the terms “tightening the belt” and “doing more with less.” The department recognizes the importance of being fiscally responsible and ensuring peak efficiency of operations. Within this report, examples will be cited demonstrating how the police department implemented effective initiatives for doing more with less and the impact that these initiatives, such as “CORE” and “COPS,” have on crime and disorder within the city. Maximum efficiency has been achieved by the organization and its members.

### *Low Levels of Supervision*

The first line supervisor, the sergeant, is considered to be the most important position within the Independence Police Department. The sergeant is responsible for directing personnel toward the effective delivery of police services through tasks ranging in complexity from routine administrative duties to tactical police operations. Some of these duties and responsibilities include ensuring compliance with policies and procedures, initiating appropriate discipline when necessary, mentoring officers under their command, and serving as the communication link between management and line officers. The sergeant’s skill defines the department and in many ways determines the agency’s success or failure in reducing crime and disorder.

To avoid overtime, it is a common practice to assign a police officer as an “acting sergeant” in the absence (approved leave time or training) of one of the regularly assigned sergeants. The police department recognizes that the role of acting supervisors can provide opportunities for career development for officers. However, because the police department lacks the appropriate number of first line supervisors, the practice of using acting sergeants occurs too frequently. Additionally, when an acting sergeant is appointed during a shift, this takes a uniformed officer away from their primary assignment of responding to calls for service.

### *Supervision and Command Ratios*

Over the past several years, the police department has sought ways to increase efficiency. Former commissioned police officer positions have been civilianized and Divisions have been reorganized. As a result, the organizational structure has become more defined and the ratio of command staff officers to employees has dropped. The ratio was 10% in fiscal year 1993-94, but dropped to 6.6% in fiscal year 2010-11.



The Uniform Patrol Division is staffed by eight sergeants with two sergeants assigned to each watch along with a patrol commander (captain). All sergeants in the Uniform Patrol Division are working sergeants; meaning the sergeants answer calls for service along with administrative responsibilities. Currently in the Uniform Patrol Division the sergeant to police officer ratio is 1:9 on both day shifts and 1:10 on both evening shift watches. The optimal ratio is a 1:6 span of control.

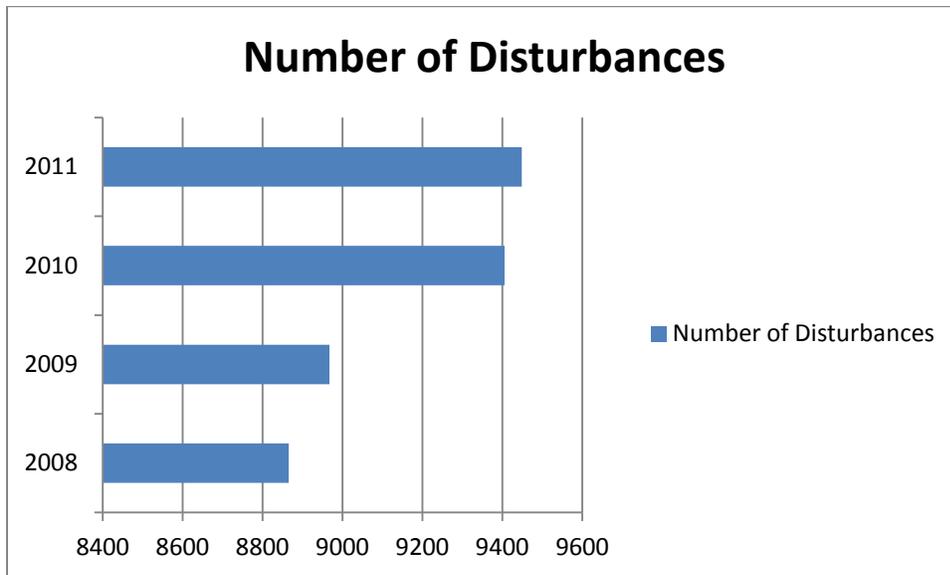
#### *Grant Funding Limitations*

The police department utilizes grant-funded positions only if these positions prove beneficial to the community and the police department without placing a financial burden on the City budget and the taxpayers. Police departments who choose to pursue federal grants to employ civilian or commissioned officer positions must identify what costs, if any, the city is responsible for or if the grant requires matching funds. Sustainability of these positions often requires a commitment of the city to keep grant positions filled for a determined period of time after the federal grant money ceases.

In 2009, the Department was able to utilize the Community Oriented Policing Hiring Recovery Grant Program to hire two detectives to start a gang unit. This needed unit has had a major impact on addressing the gang presence within the City. A position in the Department's newly formed Career Criminal Unit was also funded through this grant. Grant funding was also used to fill a patrol administrative aide position and a fleet electronics technician's position, both positions being crucial to manpower efficiency for officers and the implementation of a mobile computer system. Funding for both of these positions will expire in February of 2013. The department will face a challenge in identifying a funding source to continue both of these critical positions.

### *Crime, Disorder and Social Issues*

The department has observed an increase in disorder and non-violent crimes from 2008 to 2011. These issues will negatively impact our community and tend to lead to more serious problems in the future. One indicator is the increase in the numbers of disturbances reported. The number of disturbances has increased by 584, from 8,865 in 2008 to 9,449 in 2011.



Additionally, the number of disorderly houses (defined as houses with repeated police calls for service, to the extent that they become a nuisance to the neighborhood) has increased by 24% from 2008-2011.

### *Property Crimes*

While per-capital crime statistics fluctuate, the number of property crimes in Independence has risen to a level that leads the Kansas City metropolitan area.

Kansas City Metropolitan Crime Statistics

12/5/2011	Retrieved on 12/5/11 - 2010	
Location	Violent Crime per 1,000	Property Crimes per 1,000
<b>Independence</b>	<b>6.13</b>	<b>58.65</b>
Lee's Summit	1.24	25.40
Blue Springs	2.1	30.74
<b>Kansas City</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>55.08</b>
Raytown	3.43	40.69
Grandview	7.56	46.79

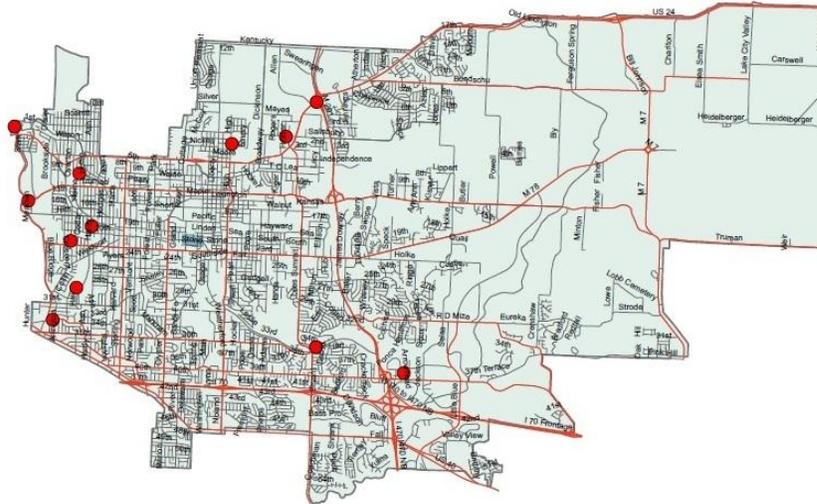
Figure 1. Information Compiled from Uniform Crime Reporting – FBI.gov

*Violent Crime Indicators*

Concerns about violent crime in Independence merit considerable attention to the focus of our policing efforts. Violent crimes such as armed robberies, drive-by shootings, and homicides have been an increasing concern. These violent crimes pose a serious threat to citizens and must be a focus of emphasis by the police and the community. The following statistics give cause for this concern:

- During 2010 Independence had nine drive-by shootings, and in 2011 (as of 11-20-11) the city has experienced 11 drive-by shootings. Drive-by shootings are typical indicators of drug and gang violence and pose a high threat to innocent citizens.

## 2011 Drive-By Shooting Locations



(Note: Map indicated Drive-by shootings as of 11-20-11. The city experienced a total of 14 Drive-by shootings in 2011)

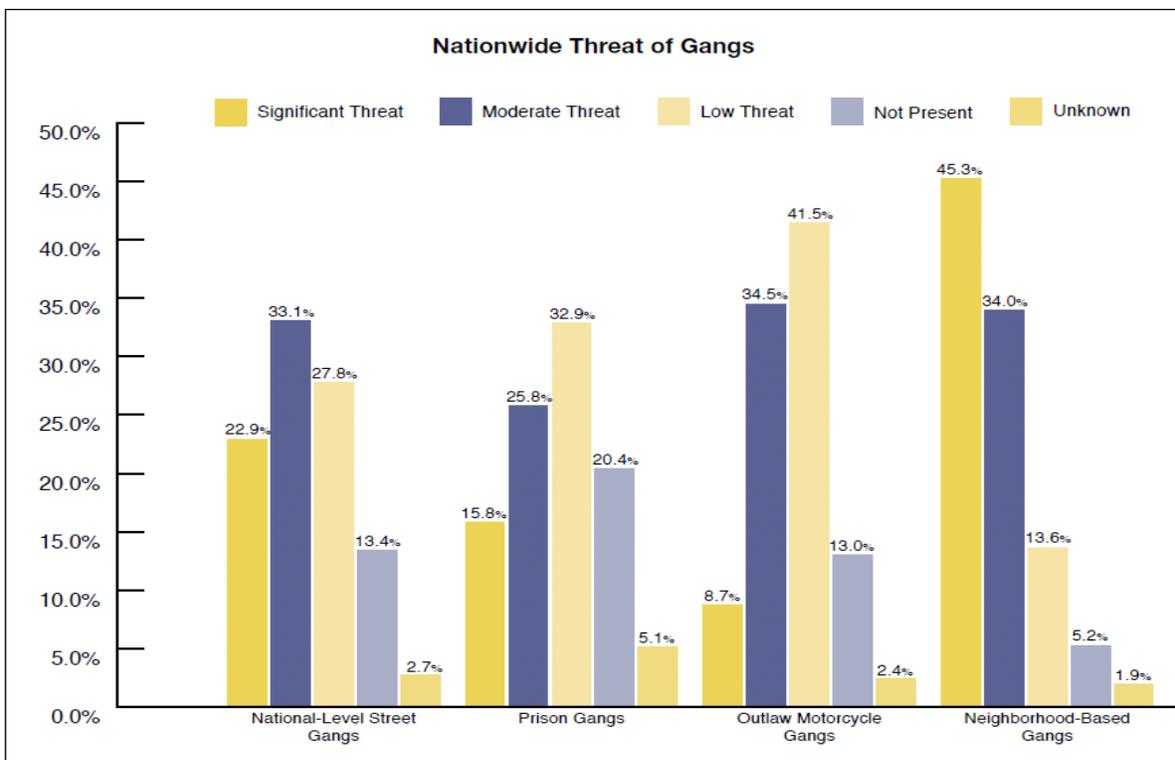
- Robberies, which include business robberies, street robberies and home invasions, hit an all time high of 167 in 2009. Between September and November of 2011, less than a three month period, a series of more than 45 robberies occurred in the City. Between 2009 and 2011, 55% of suspects arrested for robbery were not from Independence.
- From 2000 to 2006, Independence averaged 3.57 homicides per year. By comparison, in the last four years (2007 to 2010) homicides have increased to 6.75 per year. This represents a 52.8% increase in the homicide rate.
- Deadly force situations involving officers have increased significantly. From 1994 to 2006, a total of six officer-involved shootings occurred within the City. During the shorter period of the past 5 years (2006 to 2011), this has increased to a total of nine. This is nearly a four-fold increase in officer-involved shootings.

### *Street Gang Infiltration Threat*

According to a 2011 report completed by the National Gang Intelligence Center,

Gang membership continues to expand throughout communities nationwide, as gangs evolve, adapt to new threats, and form new associations. Consequently, gang-related crime and violence is increasing as gangs employ violence and intimidation to control their territory and illicit operations. Many gangs have advanced beyond their traditional

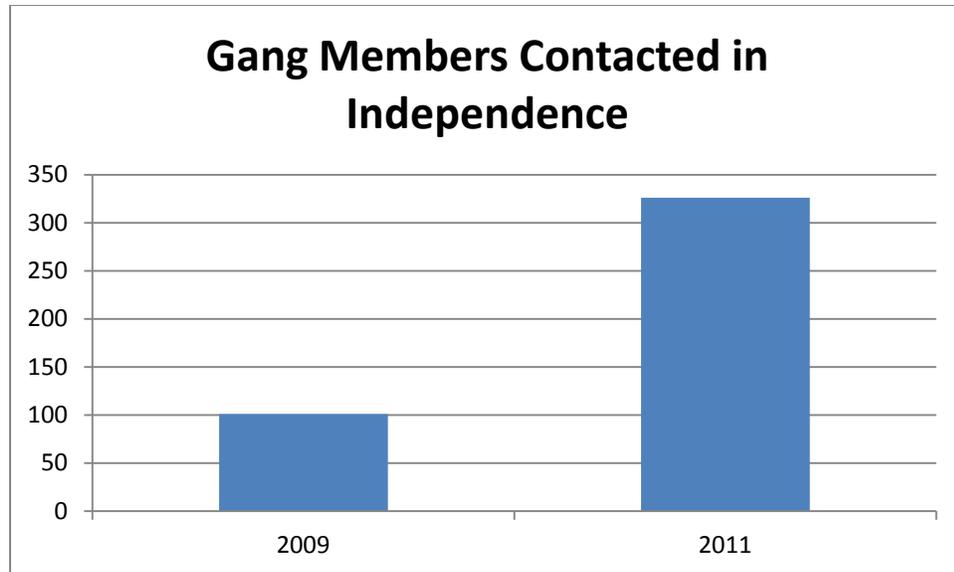
role as local retail drug distributors in large cities to become more organized, adaptable, and influential in large-scale drug trafficking. **Gang members are migrating from urban areas to suburban and rural communities to recruit new members, expand their drug distribution territories, form new alliances, and collaborate with rival gangs and criminal organizations for profit and influence.** Local neighborhood, hybrid and female gang membership is on the rise in many communities. Prison gang members, who exert control over many street gang members, often engage in crime and violence upon their return to the community. Gang members returning to the community from prison have an adverse and lasting impact on neighborhoods, which may experience notable increases in crime, violence, and drug trafficking. (United States Department of Justice, 2011)



Source: 2011 NGIC National data

\*Nationwide Threat of Gangs Chart, According to Law Enforcement. The NGIC collected intelligence from law enforcement officials nationwide in attempt to capture the threat posed by national-level street, prison, outlaw motorcycle, and neighborhood-based gangs in their communities.

Gang activity has increased in the metropolitan area, including gang members residing in or operating in Independence. In response to this threat, the police department formed a Gang Unit within the Investigations Division in 2010. The number of identified gang members contacted within Independence has increased from 101 in April, 2009, to 326 in October of 2011.



#### *Registered Sex Offender Increase*

The number of documented sex offenders residing within the city limits of Independence has steadily increased from 172 in June of 2008 to the current number of 422 as of November, 2011, which is a 40.7% increase. This has corresponded with changes to legislation regarding guidelines for registering as well as an increase in offenders relocating to the City of Independence.

#### *Additional Responsibilities (Homeland Security, Cyber Crimes, etc.)*

On September 11, 2001, the responsibilities of local law enforcement leaders changed overnight. The terrorist attacks forced a different level of thinking by law enforcement leaders to keep their communities safe. Police departments must be concerned with how to prevent and deter terrorism in coordination with the local community. Local police departments represent the front lines of the preventing terrorism. Law enforcement leaders must consider if their resources are adequate to address the issue. The threat of street level criminals impacting the community's safety is now interchangeable with the reality that terrorists are willing and capable of inflicting a much larger scale of devastation.

In 2006, the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) concluded the following:

Local law enforcement is struggling with its new role and responsibilities in handling counterterrorism issues while maintaining its crime prevention and control duties. As budgets for traditional crime control have been tightened, law enforcement faces significant increases in the type and volume of service it must

provide to keep citizens safe from violence and from vague, ongoing terrorist threat. Local law enforcement is working to be included in state homeland security plans and competing for funds with other first responders, all while developing or coordinating new homeland security efforts such as creating intelligence functions that will aid in terrorism prevention. (Davies, et al., 2005)

This statement remains true today for most local law enforcement agencies across the nation. Federal funding is minimal and primarily allocated for major police agencies. The Independence Police Department does not receive federal funding for homeland security employees. Because the organization recognizes the reality of the threat, various homeland security tasks are added to civilian and commissioned employees' job functions. Currently the department participates in the Regional Homeland Security Coordinating Committee and the Kansas City Area Terrorism Early Warning Center. If, or when, additional manpower resources are assigned to the police department, the organization will develop a strategy to bolster homeland security practices within the department and the community.

The police department has also been strained by emerging crime trends, including identity theft and cyber crimes. Independence passed an ordinance outlawing identity theft in 2007. Crimes against children through internet channels have created a new challenge and workload for law enforcement. The department participates in the Regional Computer Forensics Laboratory program and the FBI's Cyber Crimes Task Force. The police department has also handled numerous cases of fraud, theft, and robbery facilitated through online auction and sales sites.

## **SECTION II**

### **POLICE DEPARTMENT RESPONSE**

## **Police Department Response**

An internal review was conducted within the Independence Police Department to ensure the organization was operating at its peak efficiency. The organization faced the reality that staff resources of the organization are stretched beyond the ability to cope with the community's growing demands. The goal of this assessment was to seek alternate methods of policing to counter financial and personnel constraints faced by the agency. Following the assessment, the police department reached the following conclusions:

- Decisions must be made regarding the reduction or elimination of provided police services to increase officers' available (non-committed) time to solve problems within the community. Currently, the average committed time for officers is 68%. Committed time entails answering calls for service and report writing only; it does not include proactive policing or time for the officer to problem solve within the community. Furthermore, the inability to problem solve reduces the agency's ability to build trust and collaboration. In 2010, the department undertook an extensive analysis of calls for service for ways to increase officer availability and reduce response times. The results provided alternative ways to handle minor, non-emergency calls for service.
- Address disorder and nuisance violations using target-oriented policing to improve the quality of life for residents and to increase the community's trust in police response. Efforts to address disorder and nuisance violations are typically only addressed as a reactive response when officers discover violations during a call for service. Closing the communication gap with the public and increasing community collaboration will allow police officers to take a proactive stance and increase community collaboration efforts. While a philosophy of problem oriented policing has been emphasized in the Department, such strategies have struggled due to workloads from 911 calls for service.
- Limited staff and resources must be strategically deployed so officers can address emergency calls for service within a reasonable time. The primary purpose of intelligence-led policing is to provide police officers with timely, accurate crime information. Strategies can then be implemented to affect identified crime and disorder trends. Leveraging crime statistics and collecting intelligence obtained via police officers are areas in which the police department is doing well with the implementation of CORE (Crime Overview Response Evaluation). While the police department has experienced success with intelligence-led policing, it has been unable to include citizens and the business community in the process to the extent that it should. Strategic deployments have been implemented with CORE initiatives, but again these efforts are limited due to a lack of resources and calls for service workloads.
- Leveraging community resources to strengthen collaboration with the police department is needed to further crime and disorder reduction efforts. This type of

interaction is time consuming, however, and difficult in light of the current level of manpower on the department. Efforts such as Weed and Seed have highlighted community involvement in policing.

- An in-depth analysis of each Unit and position has been done to make sure the department is operating at optimum efficiency. As part of this analysis, some operational restructuring has taken place. Where appropriate, personnel have been reassigned or positions have been eliminated to meet budget constraints.

The future successes of intelligence-led policing efforts depend largely on the agency's ability to collaborate with the citizens and businesses in a meaningful way (Carroll, 2011).

The police and the citizens share ownership of community crime and disorder concerns. Although the police can solely address some crime and disorder, other problems require community-led efforts (Scott & Goldstein, 2005). The police serve as the enforcement element of this effort. The Independence Police Department believes the quality of life within each neighborhood depends upon a collaborative crime and disorder reduction effort. The community must work with the assigned area officers who are familiar with that area; however, the police department is challenged with how to increase one-on-one, problem-solving contact with the community with the manpower currently allocated.

#### *Crime Overview Response and Evaluation (CORE) and Community Oriented Problem Solving (COPS)*

Police Chief Tom Dailey implemented an intelligence-led policing strategy called Crime Overview Response and Evaluation (CORE). Following the implementation of CORE, a second intelligence-led policing concept termed Community Oriented Problem Solving (COPS) was integrated into the CORE process. CORE and COPS are strategies that involve collaboration with residents, businesses, and other government organizations to solve systemic issues. Solutions to crime and disorder issues are generally not found within the criminal justice system, but instead found within the community (U.S. Department of Justice, 2010).

The intent of CORE and COPS is for command staff and police department employees to work hand-in-hand with the community to solve problems with long term impacts. CORE and COPS provide a framework for citizens to partner with police officials with positive, specific procedures. "Local law enforcement should remain committed to using a problem-solving approach to both crime and terrorism that builds on successful partnerships with citizens" (Davies, Plotkin, Filler, Flynn, Forseman, Litzinger, McCarthy & Wiseman, 2005, p. 78).

The key elements of the Independence Police Department CORE process are the following.

- Timely and accurate information obtained from officers, investigators, and citizens for inspection by the crime analysis unit, distributed in a timely fashion
- Effective and creative tactics and strategies developed by commanders, supervisors, and line officers close to the problem
- Rapid deployment of available resources inside and outside the department

- Constant follow-up and evaluation by command staff members to determine if tactics are effective; adjustment may be required to deliver results

Prior to the implementation of CORE, communication and collaboration between department units internally and with outside agencies were not sufficient enough to reduce crime effectively. Representatives from various police divisions now hold weekly CORE operational meetings to review enforcement strategies and current crime statistics. Subsequent to these meetings, police commanders meet twice a month to measure the department's success in CORE. A variety of indicators, or performance measures, are reviewed and discussed. Crime rates before, during, and after CORE initiatives are evaluated to determine what, if any, policing strategies were effective. The primary goal of this evaluation is to determine if efforts by the police led to a decrease of crime within the targeted area.

COPS is a philosophy of the police working together with the community to solve crime and disorder issues, in which ownership of the problem is not exclusively assigned to the police. The COPS process recognizes that a cooperative effort between citizens, businesses, service agencies, and the police is often required to solve these problems. Some examples of crime and disorder in the community include drug houses in neighborhoods that create negative quality of life issues for area neighbors; the conversion of homes to rental properties with absentee landlords who fail to screen tenants thoroughly; or City parks abused by vandals and transients. Disorder issues plague many communities and are a nuisance to citizens, businesses, and the police. Disorder issues waste public resources and reflect poorly upon the community as a whole.

Often the first reaction is to report community problems to the police and expect the problem to be solved permanently by responding officers. In reality, such situations are temporarily resolved using either an arrest or the issuance of a warning. Often the problem resurfaces and the problem continues in the future. Failing to problem solve and provide closure to such issues creates problems for both the police department and the community. The community may come to distrust that the police will assist them on issues of concern. This reduces the department's capabilities to form strong community collaborations. The current workload of officers in Independence does not allow sufficient time to collaborate with citizens and business owners to lower crime and disorder and achieve sustainable results.

As an example of the use of CORE and COPS, in 2010, the city experienced an increase in property crimes in a district located on the northeast section of the community. On April 24, 2010, the department identified the area as a "CORE Initiative" (also referred to as a hot spot).

Information was disseminated to department members via electronic crime/intelligence bulletins, weekly meetings between assigned officers, supervisors, and division commanders to discuss policing strategies within the hot-spot area. After policing strategies were agreed upon, officers from the uniform, investigative, traffic safety, and tactical units implemented the strategies. The assigned supervisors in each division constantly monitored the CORE initiative and tactics were discussed and/or changed based on the intelligence gathered. After only two weeks, a department crime analyst noted a decrease in property crimes in the area.

The CORE process has built a stronger communication network both internally and within the community. This process forms relationships with the police officers and the

community, and as a result increases the community's willingness to coordinate with the police. Unsolicited comments from officers indicate that an increased feeling of "ownership" exists to resolve problems with the community.

The challenge with the CORE process is sustaining long term progress within the identified areas of concern. Because the department is lacking the appropriate manpower resources to continue work in targeted areas, experience reveals that in some cases, crime and disorder may return once the manpower resources are deployed to other areas of the city.

Since the implementation of CORE within the Independence Police Department, the organization continues to experience positive results. These gains are short lived, however. Additional resources are needed to sustain reductions. For example, in the previously cited CORE initiative, crime began to increase after resources were deployed elsewhere.

Additional police department employees and citizen involvement in the CORE and COPS process will add yet another dimension in intelligence led policing with the potential to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of related target-oriented policing strategies.

Police departments that build trust and cooperation with the community experience significant reductions in crime rates (Byxbe & Caralan, 2001)

## **SECTION III**

# **RECOMMENDATIONS: STRATEGIC POLICING MODEL**

## **Recommendation**

As outlined in the information above, the police department has expended all efforts in a focus to decrease crime and disorder in Independence utilizing the personnel and resources currently available. The Police Department will continue proactive enforcement efforts, working with the community, and maximizing the efficiency and effectiveness of police resources going forward. However, the ability to make significant, long term impacts on crime reduction and quality of life issues will require more officers and resources. A detailed, strategic plan has been prepared for implementation when additional resources become available. The police department is confident that this plan, which draws upon past successful efforts, will reduce crime and disorder.

The men and women of the Independence Police Department are committed to working with our community to make Independence safe and secure for all of our residents and visitors.

## **Policing Proposal**

In light of the regional and national challenges that exist for law enforcement, it is necessary to identify a new approach to policing that efficiently and effectively addresses crime and disorder. The U.S. Department of Justice released a report in October, 2011 that states, “Faced with a dramatic budget contraction, law enforcement leaders need to start identifying different ways to deliver police services and, perhaps more importantly, articulate what the new public safety models will look like to the their communities.” (U.S. Department of Justice, 2011). Due to rising social problems facing the nation, police departments are required to place a greater emphasis on proactive problem-solving techniques.

The recognition and acceptance of this national phenomenon is more important than ever in developing strategic management practices. The new strategic policing model was specifically developed to fit the needs of the citizens and business owners of the City of Independence. Meetings between command staff, line supervisors and officers, citizens and civilian employees have helped develop a model that will progressively address crime and disorder in Independence. This model is based on having sufficient personnel to focus on accessibility, prevention and sustainment. Highlights of the model include:

- Lowering crime through the use of intelligence-led policing and community-oriented problem solving
  - Providing district officers more time to problem-solve and target areas to address crime and disorder issues
  - Patrolling in a strategic, not random, manner. Patrols are directed based upon real-time intelligence
- Providing citizens with alternative means of receiving police services. Provides avenues other than calling 911 to contact the police for non-emergency problems
  - Non-emergency issues may be handled by appointment, telephone, internet, specific police department employees assigned to handle these issues or by other non-traditional means

- Increasing police presence in neighborhoods
- Decreasing response times to calls for police service as a result of these efforts

Lowering calls for service loads and increasing direct citizen access to police officers will allow officers more time to proactively problem-solve within their areas and to use intelligence-led policing tactics (an expansion of CORE and COPS).

### *New Patrol Model*

A new patrol model will allow for the greater implementation and use of intelligence-led policing and community-oriented problem solving. This will create teams to focus upon crime and disorder in four areas of command within the City. Elements of this patrol model include the following:

- Five officer area command teams with officers reporting to the first line supervisor (sergeant), who coordinates intelligence-led policing and problem-solving activities for the geographic area
- One officer per team dedicated as the area command liaison (similar to the current Weed and Seed officer in Englewood)
- Direct community contact with the area command liaison and sergeant via cellular phone, email, web link and/or other alternative means to increase direct communication with police department employees.
- Intelligence and real time crime information is delivered to the Patrol Division officers and sergeants to aid in developing policing strategies.
- Patrols are planned through team meetings at the beginning of (or throughout) each shift, rather than random,
- Community liaison officer will coordinate problem-solving efforts between the community and the police department
- Team activities are communicated to decision makers at intelligence led policing meetings (CORE)



The Career Criminal Unit will be available to work on issues requiring covert investigations in the areas of command.

### *Increased Police Accessibility*

Alternative options need to be made available for citizens to report crimes to help lower calls for service levels and more effectively address neighborhood issues with problem-solving techniques. In addition to the current options of calling in some reports or visiting the police front desk to complete reports, additional options will be explored to allow citizens to file and purchase police reports through the internet. The police department will explore new and innovative techniques to address the needs of the community in cost-effective and sustainable ways.

Since its implementation, “911” has become the universal number for anyone requesting a police response. This includes not only emergency situations, but also for minor, routine, and non-emergency problems. A 911 call taker receives the phone call, takes down information, determines the call’s priority, and then dispatches it. Many calls to 911 might be better handled through alternative, more efficient means, such as scheduling an appointment with a district officer or speaking with an officer by phone or e-mail. This alternative system can be facilitated through the direct citizen contact to the area command liaison and sergeant mentioned previously or through contact with a station-based officer.

The station-based officer will be able to assist citizens with issues that may be handled at the police desk or by telephone. Often a citizen merely needs to discuss an issue with a police officer to determine their options. In some cases, it may not be necessary to dispatch an officer to the scene to assist the citizen in these situations. Station officers can help reduce field officer call loads and 911 emergency call tie ups.

The goals of providing alternative means for citizen contacts are to provide more efficient police services and to reduce field officer dependence to 911, allowing the officers more time to proactively police their areas of command and to problem solve issues in the community.

### *Goals*

The goals of this strategic policing model are as follows:

- ✓ Reduce Calls for Service
- ✓ Lower Response Times
- ✓ Improve Officer Accessibility
- ✓ Reduce Disturbance and Disorder
- ✓ Allow for Proactive Policing
- ✓ Stem Encroaching Crime
- ✓ Build Sustainability

## Appendix A. Kansas City Police Department Article



*Wednesday, November 16, 2011*

### **Fighting homicides**

Since I was sworn in as Chief last month, my No. 1 goal has been to reduce violent crime. That includes solving those crimes and getting the offenders in custody as quickly as possible to prevent retaliation and additional acts of violence. In addition to the Homicide Unit, I have asked several other department elements to respond to homicide scenes, and they have begun to do so. This past weekend, when we experienced six homicides in 10 hours (a body found in a burned house, a double homicide, and a triple homicide), having those extra officers and detectives on-scene paid off.

One of the additional elements now having a representative respond to homicide scenes is the Street Crimes Unit. Their purpose is to gather information so they can assist the Homicide Unit in tracking leads and identifying and pursuing suspects as quickly as possible. They did just that on Friday and Saturday. As a result, with the help of our Career Criminal Squad, the Kansas City, Kansas, Police Department and the ATF, they were able to track down and arrest the suspects in the double and triple homicides and are now pursuing other leads on the victim found dead in the burning home.

As I [previously noted](#), following the six homicides, I called in additional officers who weren't scheduled to work last weekend. It was those members from the aforementioned Street Crimes Unit squads that were out all weekend running down leads and successfully tracked down and arrested the suspects in five of the weekend's six homicides.

The message I want to send to the citizens of Kansas City is that what we experienced last Friday and Saturday will not be tolerated or accepted as a fact of life in this city. Each incidence of homicide will be

treated as a critical incident, and we will commit all the resources necessary to ensure our best chance of success in solving the crime and bringing those responsible to justice.

I want to thank all the officers and detectives who committed their time and efforts to identifying, locating and arresting the two homicide suspects believed to have killed five individuals over the weekend. Your excellent work and commitment to the residents of Kansas City have not gone unnoticed. I also want to thank those individuals who stepped forward and assisted us in identifying and locating the suspects. We will continue to need the assistance and cooperation of the citizens of Kansas City to reach our common goal as one community to significantly reduce violent crime and improve the quality of life for all of our residents.

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