



TRANSITION TEAM



Item No. **1.B.**

Executive Summary:

Pursuant to appointment as Chief of Police in February it was recommended that a working group be established to identify and make recommendations concerning crime, quality of life issues and public safety items relative to the City of Palm Springs and the Police Department. This afforded an opportunity to dialogue with all stakeholders, discuss ideas, proposals on crime prevention, enforcement strategies and community policing programs. This transition team also served as a mechanism to brief City Council and the City Manager on the status of the Police Department and exchange proposals/ideas that will enhance the department's ability to provide quality customer service and enhance public safety.

The transition team was represented by two City Council members, the Chief of Police and representatives from the following groups; Office of Neighborhood Involvement, Palm Springs Police Officer's Association, Police Advisory Board, Human Rights Commission, community resident, Main Street Merchant Association, Chamber of Commerce and the Palm Springs Hospitality Association.

Methodology:

The transition team met and determined the methodology that would be utilized to accomplish a significant report that would be a guideline for the police department. This would consist of but not necessarily limited to the following:

- Community Needs Assessment
- Community Forums
- Community Survey
- Department Assessment
- Employee input and participation

After several working meetings and community forums the transition team outlined significant items that will be reported back to the City Council. The team members determined that it was important to identify not only specific items, but also potential objectives that could be reviewed for possible implementation by the department.

Community Assessment:

The transition team held several community forums on June 5 and June 26, 2008 at the Stroke Recovery Center and the Mizell Senior Center with approximately 100 people attending both forums. A presentation on violent and property crimes from 2004 to 2007 was discussed with quality of life issues that impact neighborhoods. In addition a presentation was made on current technology, current community policing programs and a question and answer period. A survey was conducted at both forums and posted on the department website to receive feedback. The following topics were identified from the community as having the most impact on neighborhoods; property crimes, narcotics, gangs and graffiti, transitory population, false alarms, lack of officers in neighborhoods, traffic enforcement, safety at parks and quality of life issues. There were several instances cited on lack of responsiveness by the police department.

Property Crimes: In 2007 as reported by the FBI crime statistics, the City of Palm Springs had the highest rate of property crimes in the Coachella Valley. There are various factors that have caused the dramatic increase in property crimes and there will be a multifaceted approach to decrease property crimes. This will include but not limited to:

- Work closely with the State Parole and the County of Riverside Probation department to conduct routine compliance checks.
- Educate the public through an aggressive marketing campaign.
- Research and implement a repeat offender program.
- Property crime task force.

Narcotics: There has been no street level narcotic enforcement absent uniformed patrol in Palm Springs for several years. There is a direct nexus between narcotics and property crimes. When there is a lack of narcotic enforcement there is an increase in property crimes. There will be a coordinated approach to impact narcotic sales. This will include but not be limited to:

- Personnel have been assigned to the Coachella Valley Narcotics task Force (CVNTF) and the Palm Springs Narcotic Enforcement Task Force (PSNET). CVNTF is a task force that targets street level narcotic activity and PSNET is a task force that targets mid and high level narcotic operators.
- Increase and maintain relationship with Department of Justice, Bureau of Narcotics Enforcement to ensure a continued presence in the city.
- Develop and implement an aggressive narcotic enforcement program.

Gangs: There continues to be gang activity in the Coachella Valley. Palm Springs Police Department has been a member of the Coachella Valley Violent Crime Task Force (CVVCTF) for several years. Participation in CVVCTF will continue with aggressive enforcement from a regional perspective. The following initiatives have been or will be implemented:

- Identification and documentation of gang graffiti prior to removal.
- Cal-Gang identification training for all sworn members. Riverside County was recently awarded an individual administrator node by the State of California and the Cal-Gang administration. Prior to, Riverside County reported to San Bernardino County and did not have full authorization for research, tracking and input into the state wide gang data base.
- Continued participation and enforcement from the Gang Task force.
- Research into gang intervention programs that may be appropriate.

Graffiti: Graffiti continues to impact neighborhoods and is a quality of life issue. There was a lack of clarity on the identification, documentation and reporting of graffiti. Although the removal of graffiti is accomplished in a timely manner by city staff, there was improvement needed in the communication between the police department and other city departments. The following initiatives have been implemented:

- The department takes a report and photographs every incident of graffiti that has been reported to the graffiti hotline or the police department.
- A process has been developed to categorize and file all reports of graffiti.
- Work closely with the City Attorney to review ordinances to ascertain the feasibility of seeking increased prosecution and restitution of persons convicted of tagging.
- Outreach to the youth of the community on the negative impact of tagging/graffiti.
- A quarterly meeting with city staff to ensure the graffiti removal protocol is working properly.
- A police officer with expertise in gangs/graffiti reviews all photographs/reports on a routine basis for intelligence and verification.

Parolees: The State Department of Corrections continues to work closely with regional law enforcement to ensure parolees that are introduced back into the community are supervised per legal mandates. Law enforcement understands the importance of working with the Department of Corrections assisting parolees being reintroduced into mainstream society but also realize there needs to be monitoring to reduce the recidivism rate.

- Monthly meetings with State Department of Corrections staff.
- Routine enforcement and compliance checks for persons residing in the city that is on active parole.
- Continued research on the feasibility of re-entry facilities being established in the western Coachella Valley.

Transitory Population: There continues to be issues with the transitory population that impact neighborhoods and businesses. Department staff has met with the staff from Well in the Desert to ensure there are open lines of communication. The following initiatives are in place:

- Community policing officer assigned to deal with issues at Sunrise Park and the surrounding neighborhoods.
- Enforcement program dealing with ordinance violations.
- Continued dialogue with the service providers to ensure compliance.
- Operation Safe Park has been implemented.

False Alarms: The department continues to manage a false alarm program as mandated by the guidelines of the city ordinance. A considerable amount of a police officers' time is spent on responding to false alarms. Staff will evaluate the current program to ascertain, but may not limit the evaluation to, the following:

- Numbers of actual false alarms police respond to on an annual basis.
- Percentage of an officer's time spent on false alarms and subsequent costs.
- Research into a verified alarm response program.
- Research into an enhanced call verification response program.
- Enhanced relationship with alarm companies doing service with the city.

Traffic Enforcement: A study was recently conducted by University of California in conjunction with the State of California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) on the City of Palms Springs. It was determined the City of Palm Springs per capita has the highest rate of traffic collisions and alcohol related traffic collisions in California as compared to similar cities. Since 2002, the police department has held twenty DUI checkpoints at various locations. The following initiatives have been implemented:

- Drafting of a comprehensive strategic traffic plan.
- Recent award of an Alcohol Beverage Control (ABC) grant for education, outreach, training and enforcement.
- Continued participation in the "Click it or Ticket" enforcement campaign.
- Traffic "Hot Spot" enforcement.
- Citizens on Patrol (COP) are conducting handicapped enforcement violations.
- Procurement of two License Plate Readers (LPR) for DUI and traffic enforcement.
- Review of a Red Light Enforcement program.

Department Assessment:

The transition team identified important items that are relative to the continued success of the police department. Chief Dominguez has held a series of meetings with department members and the different divisions to obtain their input and concerns. The following topics were identified as having the most impact on the department; technology, crime trends and statistical reporting, sworn and classified staffing, community policing programs, equipment and enforcement programs.

Technology: Research has indicated there are many new and innovative technological equipment and programs available to law enforcement agencies to assist in public safety. The department has compiled a list of technology projects and is conducting research and will prioritize in order of feasibility for operational and administrative needs. This includes but is not limited to:

- Upgrading and expanding the downtown camera system.
- Crime mapping for Computer Aided Dispatch.
- In car digital camera systems.
- Video feed for patrol units via mobile data computers.
- Investigative software and equipment for computer forensics.
- Community notification via the Internet and text messaging.

Statistical Reporting: The State Department of Justice (DOJ) recently conducted an audit of the departments reporting of monthly crime statistics. It was determined that in some instances the reporting of crime statistics was not being completed in a timely manner. The following have been implemented:

- Electronic reporting to DOJ through our Record Management System (RMS) to ensure the crime statistics are reported on time and are accurate

- Management review on a bi-weekly basis to ensure the reporting process is completed in the appropriate manner and timeline.

COMPSTAT: Computer statistics (COMPSTAT) is a geographical information system (GIS) approach to managing a law enforcement organization and relies on effective and accurate crime statistics and analysis. GIS supports the COMPSTAT's external focus by empowering police managers to fully understand and respond to problems and concerns of citizens including; Identifying and defining where problems are occurring (hot spots), developing problem solving strategies/tactics and implementing enforcement strategies to help reduce crime and improve the quality of life. The following have been implemented:

- Regular COMPSTAT meetings with all supervisory and management staff.
- Development and implementation of a web-based crime analysis program that will allow all department staff the ability to access crime statistics on a twenty-four hour basis.
- Development and implementation of mini-compstat meetings that involve supervisors and sworn and civilian staff.
- Hot Spot policing has been implemented.

POST Study: The Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) has been engaged to conduct a professional management study to determine the following:

- Future sworn and civilian staffing needs for the department based on annual calls for service, population (current and seasonal) and economic forecasting.
- Management study to determine appropriate organizational structure, supervisory responsibilities and identify risk management issues.

Community Policing Programs: The Police Department is enhancing our commitment to community policing by fully engaging the City's Leadership, the Police Department, the Business Community and the Public as "Partners in Public Safety". This concept is designed to balance call response with pro-active problem solving and community engagement. The department's community policing philosophy is focused on preserving and improving Palm Springs "Quality of Life". Some of the programs are highlighted in the following pages. A complete listing of our Community Policing Programs is as follows:

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| • Citizens on Patrol | • Police Activities League |
| • Citizens Police Academy | • Police Advisory Board |
| • Crime Free Multi Housing | • Police Aero Squadron |
| • Drug Prevention Officer | • Police Explorers |
| • Neighborhood Leadership Academy | • Police Reserves |
| • Neighborhood Policing Officer (NPO) | • Realtor Watch |
| • Neighborhood Watch | • Search and Rescue |
| • Operation Safe Park | • School Resource Office |

Neighborhood Policing Officer Program: The Neighborhood Policing Officer (NPO) program is being developed and implemented. The NPO program will allow residents and business owners increased communication with police officers and civilian employees.

- The city has been divided into six geographical patrol beats that coincide with the various neighborhoods identified by the Office of Neighborhood Involvement.
- Sergeants and police officers are assigned to specific neighborhoods to liaison and work closely with citizens on problem solving.
- Decentralization and enhanced communication.
- Bi-directional flow of information that assists with problem solving.

Neighbor Leadership Academy: A series of training courses has been developed, to be presented throughout the year. The training courses are designed to give residents and business owners' specific tools that can be utilized to prevent victimization.

Neighborhood Watch: The department has retooled the neighborhood watch program and will work closely with the Office of Neighborhoods to ensure sustainability.

- Recruit
 - Motivate
 - Educate
 - Collaborate
- With neighborhood leaders throughout the 21 neighborhoods

Business Watch: The department has developed a business watch program that works on the same premise but work closely with the business community.

- Recruit, Motivate, Educate & Collaborate.
- Focus on
 - All types of businesses, regardless of size throughout the community.
 - Impacting crime the affects local businesses.
 - Partnership with the Chamber of Commerce and the Downtown Main Street Association.
 - Partnership with private security companies.

Youth Outreach: The department has several outstanding youth intervention programs with the Police Activities League and the Drug Prevention Officer. These programs continue to reinforce leadership and mentorship through positive reinforcement. The department is currently developing protocol to have police officers outreach to middle school students and examine our School Resource Officer program.

- Cops n Kids- Officers spend time on campus at the middle school on a routine basis during lunch and assembly to interact/engage the students as a positive role model.
- Research into potential grant funding for youth intervention programs.
- Expand the department law enforcement explorer program.

Crime Free Multi-Housing: The police department has not been actively engaged in a current crime free multi housing program. An effective crime free multi-housing program partnerships with property management companies that work closely with the police department and the city to advocate crime free apartment complexes and multi-unit dwellings. The initiatives following have been implemented but are not limited to:

- Additional personnel trained in crime free multi-housing.
- The program is being implemented at ten locations that have been a constant problem area for calls for service and resources.
- Property management company of each location has been contacted and agreed to begin implementation of the program.
- Liaison with the City Attorney's office to ensure appropriate follow-up to enforcement.

