

Memorandum

City of Lawrence

Police Department

TO: David L. Corliss, City Manager
 FROM: Tarik Khatib, Chief of Police
 DATE: May 2, 2014
 RE: Police Department Service Deficiencies

City Commission goals as well as public input and feedback have historically indicated a desire for a highly professional, well trained, responsive, and "full-service" Police Department. Over the past several years, the Department has articulated personnel, equipment, and facility needs to be able to meet those service expectations. Some additional resources have been received by the Department and those have already begun to have a positive effect in certain areas. There remain, however, significant needs affecting service delivery. As requested, a list of service related deficiencies that exist now and/or are likely to exist in the near future follows:

Realized or Potential Service Changes	Impact/Threat
To staff patrol, School Resource Officers (SRO) reduced from six and a sergeant to four officers.	School safety, community policing, and oversight of the program.
To staff patrol, six officers and a sergeant previously assigned to the Traffic Safety Unit (TSU) reassigned.	Traffic safety and enforcement in the community.
Patrol Division restructured to allow more officers to be on-duty during statistically busiest time period of 11 AM to 3AM. As a result, 3 AM to 11 AM time period is very lightly staffed.	Minimal number of patrol officers on duty when people head to work or school. Lessened proactive patrol and preparedness for critical events during that time period.
Due to prioritization, detective position converted to a patrol sergeant position.	Less investigation of crimes.
Due to prioritization, civilian support position reclassified into a patrol sergeant position.	Civilian position still needed in other areas where commissioned officers are being utilized (e.g., IT).
Due to time required, police officers no longer pick up loose (non-dangerous) animals when Animal Control is off-duty.	Loose animals roam free or are sheltered by citizens until Animal Control is on-duty the next day.
Police officers no longer respond to some medical emergencies; left to Fire/Medical.	Increased response time for service, lack of law enforcement inquiry – medical may actually be a crime.
Current one police unit response to alarm calls.	Officer safety and criminal apprehension issue.
Lack of resources to perpetrator-focused policing.	Perpetuates reactive instead of preventative policing.
Private vehicle tows are often left to the citizen(s) to take care off.	Citizens may be taken advantage of.

Reduction in investigation of some non-state reportable (private property, damage under \$1000) accidents.	Lack of official officer involvement may cause some citizens to be taken advantage of.
Some police service calls (noise complaints, non in-progress crimes, non-emergency) often held during peak activity times.	Longer response times, violators not identified, and frustrated citizens.
During peak busy times (usually weekend nights), portions of the City are often without police presence as resources are shifted to high call volume areas.	Increased vulnerability to criminal activity (particularly property crime) in those areas.
Very large increase in mental health crisis calls. Complex and often require several officers over the course of their entire shift to properly handle for each incident.	Affects officer availability for other calls. Question of whether the right community resource being utilized.
Lack of police canines; almost all comparable cities have them.	Placing officers in harm's way during high risk searches for suspects, diminished capacity to track lost/missing persons. Long delays and time expenditures as resources have to be called in from other agencies.
Two commissioned officer positions utilized as Information Technology (IT) support.	Not cost effective, drain on patrol officer resources.
Some detectives utilized as IT support at the Investigations and Training Center (ITC) building.	Not cost effective, drain on detective resources. Function of split facilities.
Most crimes are often left to the patrol officer to investigate.	Difficult and inefficient in the call-driven, shift work, patrol environment. Causes diminished service availability.
Very little property and financial crimes (most common crimes) investigation.	Crimes that most affect citizens (numerically). Very low case clearance rate. Repeat offenders not apprehended.
Investigative Division concentration on person felonies only. Also spread thin covering day and evening hours.	Majority of cases without investigator oversight. Limited flexibility and reduced interdivision information exchange.
Training Unit understaffed.	Lack of forward momentum on reality-based and situational training for officers, a best practice.
Fewer officer training opportunities as a result of personnel needs and an insufficient training budget.	Reduced professionalism, best practices, and liability exposure (failure to train).
Very limited training space.	Lost officer time traveling to and from other locations.
Reduction in non-confrontational (community policing) interaction opportunities: school lunch program, presentations, foot patrol, and general public interaction not related to crime response.	May lead to community and police falling out of touch. Danger to only interaction being when news is bad (e.g., crime victim, crime suspect, or traffic ticket).
Event management shifted to off-duty, overtime, basis.	Increased overtime costs for non-crime related tasks.
Growth in overtime expenditures for staffing, investigations, and event management.	Budget challenge. Job equity and pay issues between non-exempt and exempt employees.
Expenditure of law enforcement trust funds for crucial training and development.	Non-renewable source. Hides true cost of training and employee development.
High crime rate, high call load, and low crime clearance rates.	Economic impact on community livability.
Only one crime analyst to track and provide information about crime trends. Should be two or three analysts for a city of this size and activity.	Inhibits best practices: predictive policing and real time information to patrol supervisors for resource deployment.

High officer to supervisor ratio.	Affects accountability and productivity.
Large percentage of the Department's fleet is a victim of deferred replacement. Patrol vehicles prioritized, however, significant other needs remain.	Problem will only grow.
Lack of exclusive Department attorney. Current attorney has other City duties. Legal updates, drafting/review of policy, advising, training, are full-time endeavors.	Obsolete policy and guidance, legal errors, exposure to risk and liability. Overworked current employee.
Potential for more criminal complaints becoming phone-in, or "self-serve" web-based.	Reduced information, lack of detail, diminished crime solvability.
Potential for refusal to task police officers to "deliver message" or "attempt to contact" person type calls and other non-police related calls.	Not helping people check in on each other when concerned. May miss someone in crisis.
Potential reduction in funeral escort services.	Perception of lack of sympathy on the part of City.
Potential to no longer investigate non-violent/person crimes without readily identifiable suspect (e.g., taking "insurance report" for property theft without any subsequent investigation to identify suspects). Would no longer travel to various locations in an attempt to obtain video(s), evidence, etc.	Service reduction. Time-intensive minor crimes would be triaged as non-investigatory. May increase minor crimes as repeat offenders would not be identified and prosecuted.
Major safety, efficiency, security, and space issues with current facility arrangement.	The Department is spread out in two main structures: the Law Enforcement Center (LEC) and the Investigations and Training Center (ITC). There are three additional storage locations for equipment and evidence. In certain situations, similarities can be drawn to the volunteer fire department model in which responders have to go to a location to retrieve necessary equipment before responding to an incident.
Lack of personnel, equipment, and facility resources can be perceived as a lack of community support by personnel that can impact morale and lead to a feeling of disenfranchisement. Also impacts competitiveness in relation to attracting the best police officer candidates.	

It is important to remember that the overarching goal for the Lawrence Police Department's resource requests has been to be able to meet expected community service levels. The Department has been very effective at utilizing current resources in an efficient manner, but some changes in service provision have already occurred. Ultimately, the solution is to add additional resources or redefine what our community service expectations are for the Lawrence Police Department.