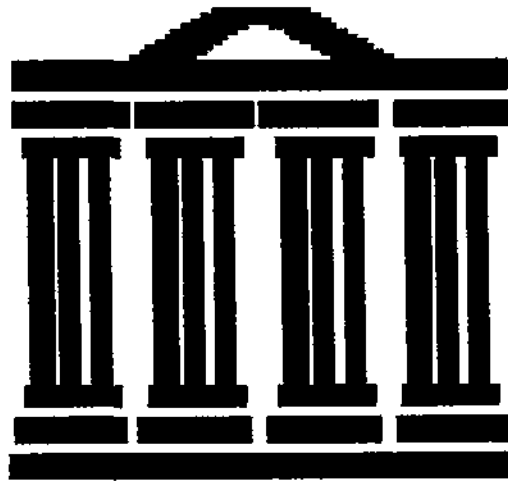


AWARD SUBMISSION

The 1996 Herman Goldstein *Excellence in Problem Solving Award*



**POLICE EXECUTIVE
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AWARD

TEAM AWARD SUBMISSION

The Temple, Texas Police Department

I. Scanning and Analysis

For decades, 8th Street in Temple was translated "trouble." 8th Street's renown reached articles in national publications and a nationally televised news magazine. The area was designated as "off limits" to military personnel. The area consisted of several small bars which catered to drug dealers, prostitutes and ex-convicts during the day and "after bar hours" coffee shops that attracted large crowds after the bars closed. With the advent of "crack" cocaine, numerous street dealers gathered in this area, taking refuge in or near overgrown lots and abandoned buildings. This strip of town became known for violent crime.

As the community policing/problem solving philosophy spread through the Temple Police Department, community meetings were conducted. Officers received numerous complaints about 8th Street. Churches on and near 8th Street complained that their members could not enter church without being solicited to buy narcotics or prostitution. Residents of the area complained of gun shots, noise, littering, pedestrians wandering through their yards, etc.

Police were commonly called to 8th Street for disturbances, assaults, robberies, etc. They were met with little cooperation. Neighbors were reticent to cooperate with police, fearing retaliation from the area's patrons. Victims of criminal offenses were openly hostile to police. Business owners perceived the police as only intervening after a problem had gotten out of hand. 8th Street, a major north/south thoroughfare, was an area from which law-abiding citizens would choose an alternate traffic route rather than risk traveling through and suffering damage to their vehicles, or worse. A common question posed to police and city leadership was, "What are you going to do about 8th Street?"

As the interest in community policing in this city grew, the city manager, police administrators, Leadership Temple members, and several area citizens attended a community policing/problem solving consortium in Fort Worth, Texas. At this consortium, attendees were introduced to the philosophy of community policing and problem solving. During the problem solving phase, attendees were asked to define a monumental problem in their respective communities. 8th Street was the City of Temple's obvious problem.

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Officers of the community policing units began to analyze the 8th Street area and tabulate crime statistics.

They reported the following:

The 8th Street Project--Prior to Intervention

	<u>Calls</u>	<u>Offense Reports</u>
300 block South 8th Street 06/01/93 thru 11-30-93	184	93
400 block South 8th Street 06/01/93 thru 11-30-93	84	39
total	268	132

Feedback received from community meetings in late 1993 and early 1994 was basically that the police "should do something." When asked for input on strategies, citizens primarily suggested that police arrest all offenders. Officers assigned to solve this problem began to brainstorm possible solutions. Alternatives considered included: adoption of a "no tolerance" law enforcement policy, an area curfew, creation of a drug free-gun free zone, an ordinance against possession of alcohol outside of bars, a loitering ordinance, police foot patrol, police bicycle patrol, installation of video cameras for surveillance, a large scale undercover drug/prostitution sting, attempts to close problem businesses, and more.

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II. Response

Alternatives considered prior to implementation were accepted or discarded based on the following reasons:

"No tolerance" area enforcement policy—it was a concern that such aggressive enforcement of the law would appear discriminatory because of the ethnic makeup of many of 8th Street's patrons. Yet, those complaining of the activity of 8th Street were of the same ethnic background as its patrons. Because of the gravity of the problem and the degree to which these problems were entrenched in the neighborhood, a no tolerance policy was adopted as an initial experiment. When the policy met with success, it was continued throughout the effort.

Area curfew- the Constitutionality of curfews in general was of concern. One applied to a specific part of town could be perceived as unfair, if not unlawful. A teen curfew was passed by city council and was actively enforced. The concept of an area curfew was discarded.

Creation of a "drug free, gun free zone"- such programs from other areas were reviewed. After consulting with city legal staff, this approach was seen as a cumbersome one. It was deduced that the goal of such a zone could be addressed in alternative strategies.

Outdoor alcohol possession ordinance - the idea for an ordinance to address a specific area of town was problematic. Claims of discrimination on the part of police and local government were of concern. To pass such an ordinance for the entire city, to include areas where no problems were apparent, seemed arbitrary. This agency decided to focus on violations of existing laws for enforcement.

Loitering ordinance - the Constitutionality of such a law was seen as questionable. The issue of loitering could be addressed through the State criminal trespass statute. Criminal trespass affidavits could be obtained from property owners, banning individuals from loitering. The collaboration between police/property owners did successfully address the loitering problem.

Police foot patrol - a full-time foot patrol effort was discarded as manpower intensive and dangerous under the then existing conditions. Officers assigned to the area in patrol vehicles and on bicycles were encouraged to walk the area and interact with business owners and patrons. The contacts developed through the adopted foot patrol variation were fruitful. This change in approach was a surprise to those involved in criminal activity (especially drug possession). They had been accustomed to patrol cars driving by and seldom stopping.

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Bicycle patrol - patrol on a bicycle was implemented. Officers benefitted greatly in enforcement from the stealth of this patrol method. Officers reported greatly increased observation opportunities and interaction with the public.

Video surveillance - video taping was implemented for limited undercover operations (narcotics stings and prostitution stings). The installation of surveillance equipment on 8th Street appeared cost prohibitive. The safety of such equipment in the area was also hi doubt. This alternative was discarded.

Large scale undercover drug operation - such a large scale undercover drug enforcement action has been a regular practice of this agency. Cooperative individuals are recruited and/or volunteer to work as police agents. These individuals purchase narcotics in high drug areas. Video and police surveillance of these police agents document the transactions. Suspects are later arrested after sealed indictment. Such an operation assisted in the 8th Street. Indictments of more than 50 drug dealers were handed down by a Bell County Grand Jury in late July 1994 and arrests were made in early August 1994. The impact of this effort can still be observed in the neighborhoods affected.

Drug purchaser/ prostitution stings - the concept of only arresting those who were engaged in the selling of drugs or prostitution was seen to address only half of the supply/demand situation. Community policing officers devised the plan to have police officers pose as drug dealers and/or prostitutes and arrest those attempting to purchase these services. Several successful operations were conducted resulting in numerous arrests.

Taxi cab operation - citizen complaints revealed that local taxi drivers were delivering numerous persons to high drug areas. It was suspected that cab drivers were involved in the local drug trade. Community policing officers enlisted the assistance of the local multi county narcotics task force. The task force provided an undercover officer to call the cabs and ask to be taken to a place to purchase "crack" cocaine. Cab drivers were successfully prosecuted for delivery of cocaine from this operation, thus all but eliminating their illegal activity.

Problem businesses - some of the businesses on 8th Street were clearly part of the problem. Illegal activity, such as the selling of bootleg liquor were commonplace prior to the 8th Street project. These businesses also apparently tolerated, and possibly encouraged illegal activity. Civil action against these businesses as public nuisances was retained as an option. This option was not, however utilized in the 8th Street project.

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The final intervention plan was a detailed one. Police would assign a minimum of two patrol officers, 24 hours a day, seven days a week to take enforcement action in the 300 and 400 blocks of South 8th Street. A zero tolerance policy was adopted. Officers from the east side COPS substation would assist patrol officers by patrolling on a bicycle, unmarked cars, marked units, etc. The COPS officers would serve as liaisons with other city departments, area churches and neighbors to organize area cleanup efforts.

Intensive, no tolerance law enforcement resulted in numerous arrests. COPS officers conducted surveillance, stopping and arresting those involved in narcotics activity. Letters were sent to registered owners of vehicles observed frequenting the area, notifying them that their vehicle was observed in a high-crime/drug area.

- Reports of violent crime in the area substantially decreased. A weakness in the intensive patrol effort was that the problems of drug dealing, prostitution and persons loitering in the area persisted. Officers realized that several vacant buildings were serving as a refuge for criminal activity. Overgrown lots served as concealment and a sense of security for drug dealers.

Officers and community members realized that a concerted effort was needed to discourage loitering and trespass in the area. Officers devised the plan to utilize the State's Criminal Trespass law. 8th Street property and business owners were contacted. The owners agreed to ban loiterers from their properties. Owners signed affidavits to that effect. This allowed officers to post signs and arrest trespassers. Officers capitalized upon this arrangement and made numerous arrests.

A partnership was forged between police, the City Attorney's Office, fire inspectors and building code inspectors. Each of the vacant buildings' owners was contacted and informed of the state of their abandoned structure(s). They were also informed as to how the buildings were being used for criminal activity. The buildings were subsequently condemned through the legal process. In time, the buildings were torn down by city personnel and the lots cleared. The structures: *THE REGAL CAFE'* (a notorious hangout for drug abusers, pushers and prostitutes), *THE PLAY MAKER* (another abandoned bar), *MUTTON'S GARAGE* (a location used as refuge for drug dealers), and *TOURK'S PAGE 4* (an abandoned bar). Also, several abandoned shacks that were being utilized for drug abuse were torn down.

Community policing officers joined forces with the City of Temple Street Department and organized several community clean up projects. Local youths painted over graffiti on the remaining buildings and picked up trash in the area. The Street Department mowed vacant lots and cared for properties not being maintained by ownership. The weakness of this effort was that it had to be performed repeatedly throughout the project. The positive aspect of this effort was that it worked! The appearance of the entire 8th Street area was changed permanently.

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Several undercover operations were also launched during and after the 8th Street Project. Undercover officers, posing as prostitutes would arrest those trying to solicit them. Another operation had police officers dressed like drug dealers, merely standing on street corners. Officers arrested those who stopped to enquire about the purchase of controlled substances.

A large scale undercover drug operation was conducted during the project. This operation netted more than 50 arrests of persons involved in the sale of "crack" cocaine. Several leaders of local drug dealing operations were also prosecuted for conspiracy to distribute cocaine. These prosecutions were conducted federally in cooperation with the Drug Enforcement Administration and the Waco US Attorney's Office. This option caused those at the root of the local drug problem (and the 8th Street problem) to be removed from this community for an extended period of time (20 to 50 year sentences have been handed down). Numerous asset seizures were also conducted, communicating to area youth and others, that drug dealing may be financially profitable for a time, but, that the fruits of such dealings are short lived.

The above was accomplished mostly over a six months period, from January 1994 through June 1994. The undercover drug operations continued until late summer 1994.

COPS officers realized that alternative activities would need to be provided for the young people that frequented 8th Street. Midnight Basketball was started as such an alternative. Through cooperation with the city recreation department, a nearby city recreation center was obtained for late night use. An average of fifty youths attend each one of these sessions.

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III. Evaluation

8th Street and its surrounding neighborhood were impacted dramatically by the community policing/problem solving efforts. What was once a notorious hot spot of criminal activity is now a quiet business area. The results may best be illustrated statistically:

STATISTICS DEMONSTRATING INTERVENTION'S SUCCESS			
1993 prior to the 8th Street Project			
June 1st-thru November 30th	BEFORE	<u>Calls</u>	<u>Offense Reports</u>
300 and 400 blocks South 8th Street		268	132
1995 after the 8th Street Project			
June 1st-thru November 30th	AFTER	<u>Calls</u>	<u>Offense Reports</u>
300 and 400 blocks South 8th Street		31	5

**8th Street Intervention;
Before/After Intervention**

It is of further note that the nature of police calls and offense reports in the area have changed drastically. Of the 31 calls received in the 1995 sampling, six of those were alarm calls from a newly installed device. None of the offenses from 1995 were violent crimes.

The aesthetics of the 8th Street area are totally different from years past. The area is clean and well kept. Regular maintenance of the area is now accomplished by local business owners and the various city departments. *Community members were proud to have the City Council name 8th Street Martin Luther King Drive.*

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A concern prior to the implementation of the 8th Street project was that the problems of 8th Street might just move to and saturate another neighborhood. Continuing efforts by community policing officers have prevented this occurrence. The displaced drug trade exists in a much smaller way and is aggressively pursued. This has resulted in street drug dealers being spread out and not congregating in any one area as they once did. As problems are perceived in neighborhoods, empowered officers develop strategies to address them.

The quality of life has been improved drastically in each of the areas where a concerted community/police partnership has been formed. At the inception of the east side substation in 1992, drug dealing and violent crime were reported as oppressive to citizens. The current neighborhood concern is overgrown lots and street lighting. These new problems have been addressed by police coordinating activities with other city departments. New street lighting has been installed and lots have been mowed and cleaned up. This drastic shift from a fear drug dealers and victimization of violent crime, to a concern for neighborhood appearance, indicates a new pride in the area. Almost without exception, citizens polled in the area indicate a vast improvement in their quality of life.

Similar fears of criminal activity were addressed by community policing efforts when the 1993 substation was established in north Temple. Citizens expressed their fear of violent crime and in particular, concern about the activities emanating from the local housing authority project and neighboring apartment complexes. Currently, violent crime is all but nonexistent in this area. Neighborhood concerns have also shifted to those motivated by neighborhood pride.

As community policing has expanded modularly throughout this city and has been adopted by police, a similar change in citizen perception has occurred. Fear of being victimized by violent criminal activity has been alleviated. After community policing/problem solving efforts were conducted, concerns have shifted to neighborhood enhancements.

Police/community dialogue has been transformed. Police are now perceived as more responsive and concerned with the problem of the citizen. The decrease in the perception of a solely reactive police department to one that will take the time to listen has fostered a relationship of trust between the public and police.

The dramatic impact of the 8th Street project on the quality of life in this community is apparent. No longer is Temple known for the criminal activity of 8th Street. No longer do citizens choose to avoid an expedient travel route in fear of being victimized. 8th Street is no longer a detractor to the quality of life in Temple.

The quality of life for all citizens of the City of Temple has been improved by relationships that developed during the community policing experience. Improved citizen/police rapport is the obvious benefit of community policing. It has been this department's experience that lasting

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relationships have been formed with other agencies as a result of community policing. The development of this communication and cooperation has enabled police to address community problems in a more expedient manner.

Community policing and its philosophy of officer and citizen empowerment has given us the power to make decisions and effect change. It has empowered citizens to determine "*their*" quality of life in the City of Temple. Together, in partnership we have, and will continue to, effect positive change.

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IV. Philosophy and Organization

A. A HISTORY OF COMMUNITY POLICING/PROBLEM SOLVING IN TEMPLE, TEXAS

In early 1992, the Temple Police Department, at the suggestion of *Leadership Temple*, an area young executive and citizenship development program, investigated the adoption of the Community Oriented Policing Philosophy. Members of this agency, to include the chief of police, along with community members and city leaders, attended a Community Oriented Policing familiarization consortium. The group was exposed to the philosophy of citizen/police problem identification and problem solving. They recognized the apparent vast benefits of the Community Oriented Policing approach and made a decision to implement these philosophies department and community-wide. A genuine excitement among these leaders served as the driving force behind the philosophy's adoption.

Decentralization of police and the development of a police/neighborhood partnership to address quality of life issues became the goal of the Temple Police Department. The police department, in concert with city leaders and the Temple Housing Authority devised the plan to open a COPS substation in east Temple at a Housing Authority Project. This area was chosen as the initial sight in that analysis of data and crime statistics revealed serious and visible crime problems. Arrests and calls for service were at an all time high with most of the crime traceable to drug abuse. Federal monies were also available through the Housing Authority's ability to obtain a Public Housing Drug Elimination Program (PHDEP) Grant. This group later initiated the 8th Street Project. Three police officers were given substantial training in the COPS/Problem Solving paradigm. These officers were designated for full-time service and implementation of the philosophy. These officers were assigned to the substation and given *ownership* of a neighborhood. The officers were empowered to determine problems perceived by the neighborhood and to pursue strategies to solve these problems. This substation was opened in October 1992.

Subsequent substations have been opened throughout the city: North Temple, October 1993; South Temple, June 1995; West Temple, January 1996. Currently, 12 officers and two field supervisors are dedicated full-time to these neighborhoods. These officers are involved in problem identification/solving; numerous community educational programs; athletic programs for youth; and strong, innovative, proactive law enforcement actions. The COPS officers are empowered to approach their mission in many varying ways: on a bicycle; marked police units; unmarked police units, etc.

From the time the Temple Police Department and the community embraced the Community Oriented Policing concept, a substantial effort has been made to educate both police and the community. Police officers have received numerous hours of training in this paradigm shift. They were afforded the time necessary to solve problems as opposed to merely responding to calls for service. Officers

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also had the opportunity for temporary assignment with those officers assigned full-time to the COPS effort. This allows officers to practice problem solving strategies and familiarize themselves with the numerous educational programs (24 different programs; from an Explorer Scout Post to rape prevention classes) and service efforts sponsored by the full-time COPS officers (such as home visits for the elderly).

Currently, the Temple Police Department is preparing for total decentralization. This preparation consists of a Team Policing experiment where a team of patrol officers, investigators and narcotics officers are assigned all responsibility for a portion of the city. Emphasis is placed upon developing relationships with the community, gaining their confidence and trust, and solving perceived neighborhood problems. Quality of life issues are paramount. Officers are empowered to make decisions to bring about change. Data from this experiment will be analyzed to allow honing of the process prior to the implementation of total decentralization.

The concept of partnership with the community has permeated all aspects of this agency, to include the Temple Police Department mission statement:

"It is the mission of the Temple Police Department to create a partnership between the community and police by maintaining a safe, peaceful and positive environment in order to improve the quality of life for all citizens. This alliance shall be forged with pride and caring service."

And the department's motto:

"With Pride, and Caring Service "

The community has been educated in the concepts of community oriented policing through a calculated media blitz, regular community meetings, door to door contact by officers, casual neighborhood contacts by officers, specialized educational/information programs and through the publication of pamphlets and fliers.

B. Explanation of why the Temple Police Department and our Community/Department chose to move to community policing/problem solving.

The *Leadership Temple* organization had chosen Community Oriented Policing as a topic of study for a required project. It was determined that teamwork between citizens and police in problem solving would be far more effective than the prior reactive approach of the Temple Police department. As city leaders, police administration and department members, community leaders and the Temple Housing Authority learned of the Community Oriented Policing approach, they accepted the philosophy as the "cutting edge" in law enforcement. This effort would make for a much more positive police/citizen relationship.

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Examination of the high crime/drug areas in the city revealed an inherent hostility toward police. This hostility emanated even from residents of these areas who were not involved in illegal activity. Police were met with little cooperation from suspicious citizens. An adoption of the Community Oriented Policing philosophy seemed an intelligent and logical choice for those involved in the decision making process.

Though committed to the application of the Community Oriented Policing philosophy at the original east side substation and its neighborhood (which later initiated the 8th Street project), quantitative and qualitative data would be analyzed to determine the future course of this agency. The results from this first COPS effort were phenomenal. Those who had met the police originally with hostility and a reluctance to offer information were now seeking out the COPS officers. Neighborhood problems were identified and solved, many in a very visible manner. Word spread throughout the community of the COPS approach's success. Residents not only accepted the COPS philosophy as valid, but, began to demand COPS' presence in their neighborhoods.

An analysis of calls for service and arrests prior to and after the initial COPS effort, clearly demonstrates the community policing philosophy's success:

CALLS FOR SERVICE			
	Prior to COPS	After COPS	
	<u>1990</u>	<u>1994</u>	<u>% Reduction</u>
East Side Project	120	31	74.2
North Side Project	190	49	74.3

ARRESTS			
	<u>1990</u>	<u>1994</u>	<u>% Reduction</u>
East Side Project	26	5	80.8
North Side Project	41	13	68.3

As soon as funding, training and staffing permitted, the Temple Police Department and the community moved briskly into community policing.

Leadership Temple's Chairperson happened to be the Temple Housing Authority's Deputy Director, Sharon Strain. She approached then Chief of Police, Thomas Vannoy, and inquired for the group as to what project(s) might be addressed by the group for the betterment of the community. Vannoy suggested the group investigate community oriented policing.

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Strain and her *Leadership Temple* group began to intensely research community oriented policing. Upon gathering and sorting this research, Strain approached Chief Vannoy. The chief subsequently adopted the philosophy after conducting his own research. An opportunity for the funding of officer training and deployment into the first COPS substation became available as Temple Housing Authority Director Hal Rose, Strain and their staff applied for and received a Public Housing Drug Elimination Grant.

Strain and other participants in *Leadership Temple*, along with Vannoy began to present the concept of community oriented policing to numerous church and civic organizations. Each of the organizations expressed a keen interest in seeing community oriented policing become a reality in Temple, Texas. Soon, local media outlets began to investigate and report on community oriented policing. The public at large began to welcome the idea of change from reactive policing to proactive community-based problem solving.

Chief Vannoy selected a core group of officers to receive training in the concepts of community policing. Those officers returned from this training convinced that this philosophy could be implemented in this agency and that it would become a service to the community. Of these officers, two patrolmen and a sergeant (field supervisor) were selected and empowered to begin Temple's first community policing project. This substation was located in east Temple.

Once the community oriented policing as a philosophy was accepted, city leaders and police department administration attended a COPS seminar in Fort Worth, Texas. City Manager David Taylor, other city officials, several community leaders, Housing Authority officials and police department members attended the consortium. Attendees received orientation and education in the Community Oriented Policing philosophy and participated in problem solving exercises. This group returned from the conference excited at the prospect of officer/neighborhood empowerment: the community and the police department working together to solve the community's perceived problems.

Soon thereafter, every officer in the police department was exposed to the COPS philosophy. Officers participated in this training with community members began to slowly adopt the COPS philosophy into their approach to law enforcement. A slow, but apparent shift in approach has embraced the entire Temple Police Department.

The east side Temple COPS substation and its accompanying community contact/educational efforts were initiated in 1992, with the actual substation opening in October of that year. With 1993, more officers were added and a second substation opened at a north side housing project. Community involvement and support were apparent from the beginning of their exposure to community policing.

As word of the success of these efforts spread across the community, the police department was flooded with inquiries as to when community policing would be coming to their neighborhoods.

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In 1995, a west side substation was opened. In 1996, a south side substation was added. Each were staffed by officers who would be empowered and dedicated full-time to the police community policing/problem solving approach: discovering perceived neighborhood problems; working with the community and other agencies to solve those problems.

C *A description of how the community policing effort has changed the Temple Police Department/Community relationship^).*

Community policing in general, and the 8th Street project in particular have greatly impacted the police/community relationship. Many of those who were reluctant to speak with police in the past are now calling the police to offer information. Neighbors in the 8th Street area now talk freely with police about any current problems and reminisce about the past problems on the street. Wheatley Elementary, which is located one block east of 8th Street developed a close partnership with neighborhood officers. They participated in the area cleanups and have maintained close contact with COPS officers.

Community wide, the success of the 8th Street project and other community policing efforts have demonstrated to the community that police are responsive to problems and committed to a police/community-based approach. Solicitation of input from neighborhoods about perceived problems has become the practice of this agency. The distribution of questionnaires has shown that police perception of a neighborhood's problems can differ greatly from actual concerns and fears. As police have addressed quality of life issues, the community has responded with great support. This support was graphically illustrated when a multimillion dollar bond issue for police computer and communications equipment was overwhelmingly passed in each district of the city. It is questionable as to whether such an election result would have occurred prior to the solidification of the community/police relationship by way of community policing.

D. *A description of who was involved in making the decision to accept community policing/problem solving as an enforcement strategy and how they were involved.*

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E. A description of the length of involvement our community has been operating with the strategy of community policing/problem solving.

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