

PART IV

PROVIDING A SAFE COMMUNITY

CHAPTER 16: POLICE SERVICES

Reasonable assurance of safety is vital to the development of a vibrant and growing city. Effective delivery of police services affects economic development, population growth, and ultimately, the fiscal well being of a city. Nationwide, the awareness of crime is cited as a primary factor in the perceived quality of life within communities. Employers and individuals frequently consider crime in their relocation selection process.

The City of Fort Worth provides police protection to residents within the city limits. Persons living in the extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) or Limited Purpose Annexation Areas rely on county sheriff departments for this service. All of the statistical material found in this chapter relates to law enforcement and crimes occurring within the city limits.

EXISTING CONDITIONS AND TRENDS

Fort Worth, like many other cities in our nation, has experienced cyclical patterns in crime, with large increases followed by steep decreases. The last significant up-swing occurred in the 1980s and culminated in 1991. When compared to 40 other large U.S. cities during that time, Fort Worth had the third highest level of crime. The negative impact of crime and the adverse publicity it generated had a significant impact on the local economy.

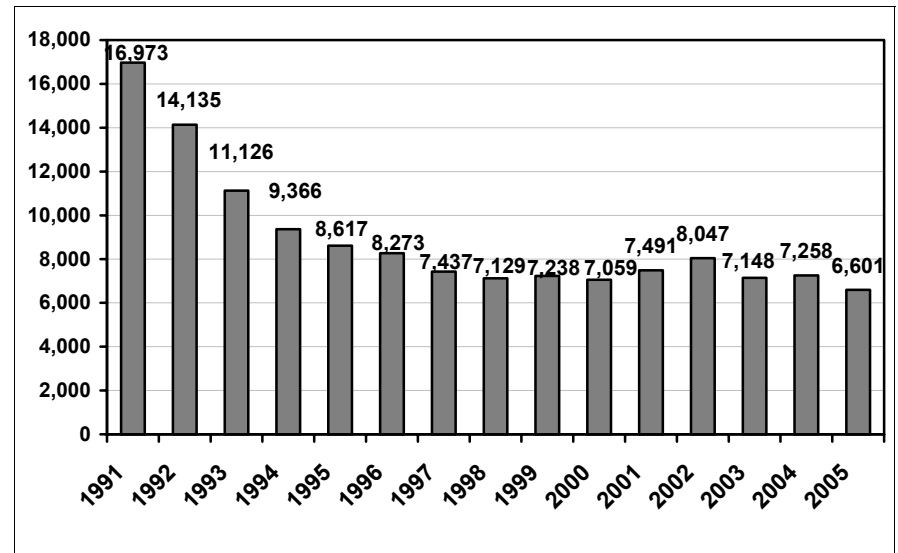
Local business leaders encouraged the then Mayor and City Council to develop a plan to address the situation. This plan, called "Code: Blue," with its emphasis on community involvement and proactive crime prevention, has been very effective in reducing crime.

A preliminary comparison of crime in 2005 and 2004 indicates a four percent decrease in the number of Part I crimes. Violent crime increased 2 percent, while property crime decreased 4 percent. Murder increased from 52 offenses last year to 61 in 2005. As a result of the declining number of overall Part I crimes and the city's increasing population, the crime rate per 100,000 residents declined by 9 percent in 2005. The crime rate of 6,601 Part I crimes per 100,000 population represents the city's lowest crime rate since 1980.

Crime Prevention

In past years, increases in crime typically followed funding decreases. In an effort to break past cycles of resource reductions that ultimately lead to increased crime, the City created the Fort Worth Crime Control and Prevention District in 1995, which was approved in referendum by 59 percent of voters. The district went into effect on October 1, 1995, and is funded by a one-half cent sales tax, which provides approximately \$45 million per year to the Police Department budget. The district was originally approved for five years, and was renewed for an additional five years on May 6, 2000 and again on February 5, 2005. The vision of the district remains the

Part I Crimes, per 100,000 Population, 1991-2004



From 1991 through 2004, Fort Worth experienced a 61 percent decrease in the Part I crime rate per 100,000 population. Fort Worth uses Part I offenses as a measure of crime in the community. The following offenses are considered Part I offenses: murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny-theft, and auto theft. (Source: Police Department, 2005.)

same: to make Fort Worth the safest major city in the United States. The Crime Control and Prevention District is a specialized government district and is required to have both a plan and a budget.

Funds from the district have been used to create and expand crime control and prevention programs that have assisted in achieving these objectives. In addition to the new and expanded programs, funds have been used for 194 new positions, new and replacement vehicles, two mobile storefronts, two helicopter leases, communications equipment, Neighborhood Patrol Officers, to support Citizen on Patrol (COP) activities, and technology infrastructure.

Organization of Police Department

The department is funded through the general fund, Fort Worth Crime Control and Prevention District, and various grants. Sworn personnel are governed by state civil service regulations (Texas Local Government Code, chapter 143). The department is divided into six bureaus:

- Executive Services Bureau — responsible for training, internal investigations, , and planning.
- Administrative Services Bureau — responsible for fiscal management, personnel functions, and Records.
- Operational Support Bureau — contains specialized units that provide support to other bureaus, including Air Support, Communications, and Forensics.
- Special Services Bureau — responsible for specialized investigations and enforcement programs, includes centralized investigative units such as Homicide, Sexual Assault, Major Crimes, Gang Enforcement, Vice, Narcotics, Youth Services, and Traffic Enforcement.
- Northwest Field Operations Bureau — divided into two Field Operations Divisions (North and West). The two divisions are subdivided into six Neighborhood Policing Districts, headed by a Lieutenant who serves as the Officer-in-Charge .
- Southeast Field Operations Bureau — divided into two Field Operations Divisions (South and East). The two divisions are subdivided into six Neighborhood Policing Districts, headed by a Lieutenant who serves as the Officer-in-Charge.

The city is further subdivided into 78 patrol beats, and the department uses Neighborhood Police Officers within the Neighborhood Policing Districts.

Facilities and Equipment

The Police Department shares its headquarters with the Tarrant County Sheriff's Office at 350 West Belknap. The upper four floors are used as jail space, while the lower floors consist primarily of office space. The department shares a training facility with the Fort Worth Fire Department located north of the central business district at 1000 Calvert Street, which houses an indoor-outdoor shooting range. The Police Department also has an auto pound. The auto pound also stores certain types of physical evidence. The police heliport is located on the north side of the city, and it houses the department's helicopters and related maintenance equipment.

Mobile Storefront



The Mobile Storefront shown above was purchased with Fort Worth Crime Control and Prevention District funds. They are used throughout the community and are well equipped with communications equipment so officers can exchange information with others and perform other law enforcement tasks. (Source: Police Department, 2005.)

Neighborhood Outreach



The Fort Worth Police Department has won numerous awards for community policing and is extremely active within all neighborhoods. Here officers prepare to lead the way for a children's bicycle race and a neighborhood event. (Source: Police Department, 2005.)

All four Field Operations Division Headquarters are owned by the City of Fort Worth. They are located at 2500 N. Houston Street, 5650 E. Lancaster Avenue, 3128 W. Bolt Street, and 3525 Marquita Street. Neighborhood Policing District headquarters 5, 9, and 11 share space with the division headquarters. Neighborhood Policing District 6, located at 1100 Nashville Street, shares a City-owned facility with the Traffic Division. All other Neighborhood Policing District (NPD) headquarters are leased, and are currently funded through the Fort Worth Crime Control and Prevention District. As a result of a comprehensive management study conducted by Justex, a firm specializing in law enforcement operations, it was recommended that the department reduce the number of NPDs and increase the number of Field Operations Divisions. The command staff of the police department is researching this recommendation and exploring the possibility of five Field Operation Divisions, which would include a Central Division, and 10 Neighborhood Policing Districts.

Technological Systems

A new Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system was implemented on November 20, 2002, in the new backup Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) below City Hall. They moved to a newly renovated Police Communications facility at 3000 W. Bolt Street on October 23, 2003.

The department implemented a new state of the art records management system (RMS) in August of 2005. The system implementation has represented a change in business practices for the department. Officers now enter offense information into a relational database, which allows the department to analyze and investigate crimes in a more timely fashion.

GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

Make Fort Worth the safest major city in the United States.

- Attain a crime rate of 6,000 Part I crimes per 100,000 population by 2007.
- On an annual basis, crime data is gathered and compared for 40 major cities in the United States. To be #1 represents the highest crime rate and #40 represents the lowest crime rate. Our goal is to reduce the rank of Fort Worth's crime rate to 30th out of the 40 major cities.
- Increase number of Citizens on Patrol (COP) members by five percent annually.

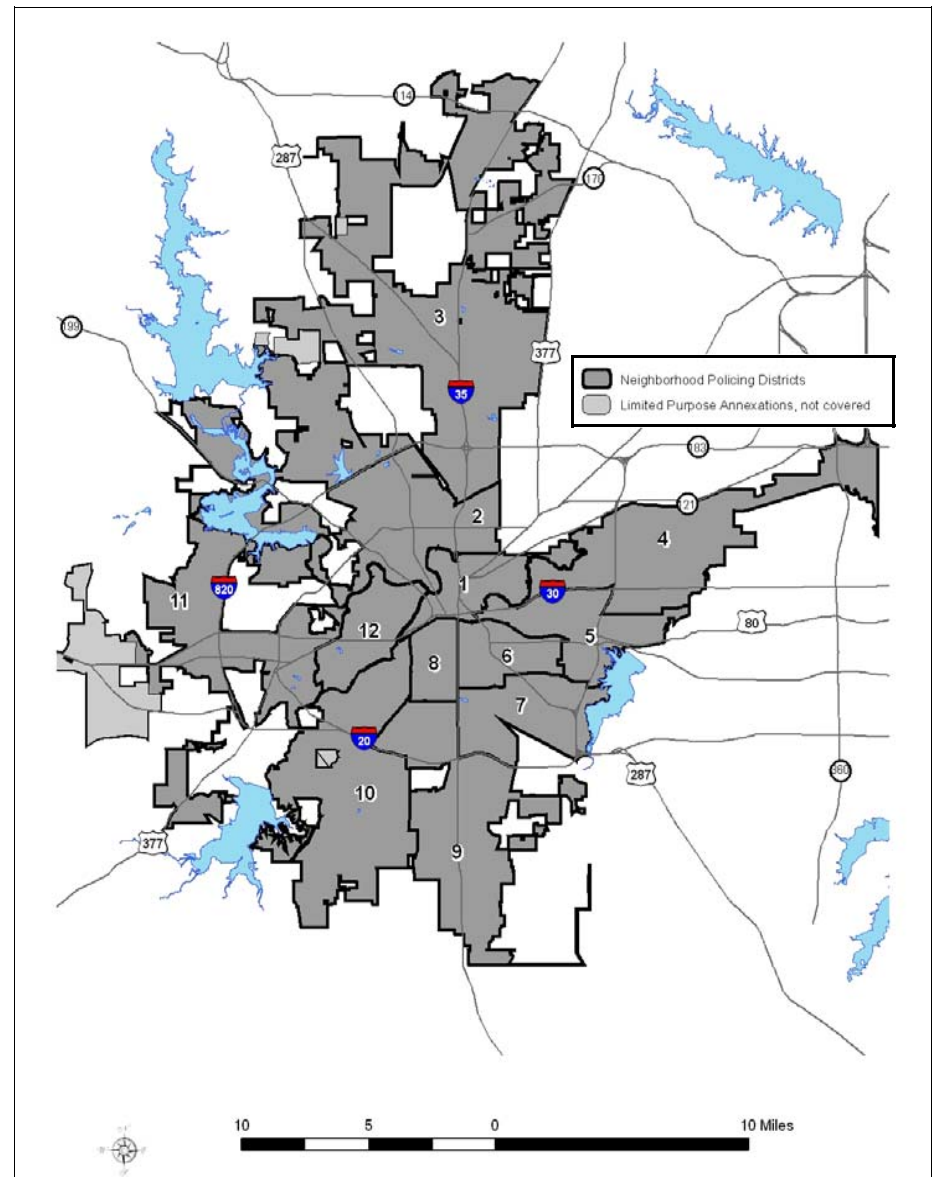
POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

The following policies and strategies will enable the City to implement its police service goals and objectives:

Current Policy

- Interact in a proactive manner with all citizens, community groups, and members of City government to inform, guide, and pursue collaborative problem solving.
- Continue community-based police efforts by actively seeking funding and other resources necessary for successful implementation.

Neighborhood Policing District Boundaries, 2005



Fort Worth is divided into four field operation divisions: north, south, east, and west. Each division is divided into Neighborhood Policing Districts, which are further divided into police beats. The City is divided into 12 Neighborhood Policing Districts. (Source: Police Department, 2005.)

PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS

Programs

- Code: Blue, combined with the implementation of territorial command, is one of the most comprehensive and ambitious police service programs implemented in the nation. This multifaceted strategy involves several City departments, social service providers, community groups, and citizens. The territorial command strategy places Lieutenants in charge of Neighborhood Policing Districts and expects them to take functional responsibility for reducing crime within their target area. Neighborhood-based policing emphasizes close interaction between officers and the community. Neighborhood Police Officers (NPOs) work proactively with the community on problem-solving and crime prevention techniques and are assigned to certain Field Operations Divisions (FOD). They are not responsible for routine police calls. They are aided by Citizens on Patrol who are trained and equipped to spot and report crime. Code: Blue also includes Neighborhood Watch programs, Ministers Against Crime, and Business Watch.
- Citizens on Patrol (COP) has been an extremely successful program and was awarded the Excellence in Community Policing Award by the National League of Cities in December 1997. As of November 30, 2005, the program had 1,834 active participants. Over 6,800 citizens have participated in training since the inception of the program in 1991.
- Storefronts are small office spaces located within neighborhoods that are used by police officers to complete paperwork and meet with citizens and to provide meeting locations for COP groups and other community groups. There are 24 storefronts scattered throughout the City.
- Mounted Patrol is primarily used in Downtown and the Historic Stockyards. Mounted Patrol is good for patrolling areas that are difficult to patrol by car, handling crowd control, and providing information to the public. It is a very visible example of community policing and is often the symbol of law enforcement to tourists. Fort Worth's Mounted Patrol is part of the Operational Support Bureau, and stables are provided adjacent to the North Field Operations Division headquarters at 2500 North Houston.
- Comin' Up is coordinated by the Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Fort Worth, and exposes gang-related youth to job training, job placement assistance, tutoring, General Education Development (GED) high school equivalency certificate preparation, conflict resolution, parenting skills, anger control, and drug education. There are approximately 800 participants currently in the program.
- School Security Initiative, funded by the Crime Control and Prevention District, assigns police officers to specific schools to resolve conflict and help school personnel with behavioral problems.
- Crime Response Teams, also funded by the Fort Worth Crime Control and Prevention District, target specific crime problems within a defined area by the use of short-term saturation operations. There are four teams, one for each of the four field operation divisions. If needed, the four teams can be combined and moved to one division or NPD. Teams are trained and equipped with riot gear

Citizens On Patrol (COP)



Citizens On Patrol has been a successful program of the Fort Worth Police Department. The program has grown significantly since its inception in 1991. As of November 2005, 240 COP groups have formed, and more than 1,800 active members participate in the program (Source: Police Department, 2005.)

Mounted Patrol



The Fort Worth Police Department Mounted Patrol began in the late 1970's in response to transient problems occurring in the Stockyards area. The teams are highly visible, very effective, and go wherever they are needed. Their special maneuverability enables them to be effective at area malls, hospital parking lots, Downtown, and residential areas. (Source: Police Department, 2005.)

and serve as an intermediate response between patrol officers and the Special Weapons Attack Team (SWAT).

The Fort Worth Crime Control and Prevention District (CCPD) is an important component of effective police protection in Fort Worth. In addition to funding some of the above programs, it also funds special events overtime for officers; Sex Crime Registration, Apprehension, and Monitoring Team; Neighborhood Crime Demolition (residential and commercial); expanded narcotics investigation; Gang Graffiti Abatement Program; Parks Community Policing; Homeland Security; the recruitment and training of new officers; a significant portion of the After-School Program; and a variety of other crime control and prevention programs.

Capital Improvement Projects

In order to implement the modified Justex recommendation of five Field Operations Divisions (FOD) and 10 Neighborhood Policing Districts (NPD) it will be necessary to build new FOD headquarters that will be central to the new boundaries and within high growth areas, as well as considering co-location with other City departments. It should be noted that several of the NPD facilities are leased rather than City-owned and may be retained while City-owned facilities will be used in some locations. This decision will be made on a site by site basis.

Neighborhood Police Officer



Neighborhood Police Officers (NPO) often advise residents on home safety issues. (Source: Police Department, 2005.)

Bicycle Patrol



Neighborhood Police Officers meet with community organizations on a variety of issues, such as bicycle safety. (Source: Police Department, 2005.)

