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SOUTH BEND POLICE DEPARTMENT
RELATIONSHIP BASED POLICING
STRATEGIC PLAN

One of our core goals at the South Bend Police Department is to develop stronger relationships and enhanced engagement between members of our community and police officers. In developing these relationships with officers, our community members will be empowered to not only help reduce crime and disorder but also help reduce the fear of crime itself, making South Bend a safe and vibrant city for all.

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To our community,

We believe in the Nine Policing Principles, established in 1829 by Sir Robert Peel. My personal favorite is number seven: “To maintain at all times a relationship with the public that gives reality to the historic tradition that the police are the public and that the public are the police, the police being only members of the public who are paid to give full-time attention to duties which are incumbent on every citizen in the interests of community welfare and existence.” We strive to operate with our internal concept being **‘the most important call you’ll ever be on, is the one you’re on.’**

In today’s modern environment, mutual relationships and input between community and police can no longer be suggestions or options. There is a distinct difference between knowing someone and knowing of someone, the latter is based on perception and conjecture, whereas the former implies a closeness and mutual understanding. It is important for our community to *know* officers as human beings, as members of the community. We are the same as everyone else, except for our added responsibilities, expectations, and performance while we wear the badge on our community’s behalf. It is important for our community to know that we are always open to suggestions on how to better ourselves to best serve our community, and we are open to sharing our knowledge and experience with our community.

It is imperative to treat everyone with dignity, respect, fairness and equality, building these values into our operations, DNA and culture. We acknowledge that means getting better at listening to our community while also getting better at sharing the good that we have done, are doing, and continue to do. For us to succeed, we must be in conversation with you, our community. We want to hear your feedback and have open conversations. It is our duty and pleasure to serve you. Therefore, we ask that you please join us in confronting the issues in our community and doing something about them. We cannot do this alone, together we can.

Scott Ruskowski
Chief of Police

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Values, Vision, Mission & Priorities

The cornerstone of the South Bend Police Department's comprehensive crime fighting strategy is built on community involvement, including better communication and collaboration between officers and the community we serve. Relationship policing increases connectivity and engagement between people and officers. The result improves our ability to decrease crime, and the fear of crime, and makes South Bend a safe and vibrant community for all.

Over the past several years, the SBPD has developed new and innovative strategies to help in crime reduction. We have also engaged the community in new and creative ways.

Initiatives, Plans & Strategies

At the core of our policing strategy is the Group Violence Intervention (GVI). The GVI initiative is a proven, evidence-based lifesaving violence reduction strategy. Working with the National Network for Safe Communities & John Jay College of Criminal Justice, as well as Goodwill and its Outreach and SAVE team, the SBPD has been successful in implementing this initiative and strategy.

The GVI strategy is guided by the following principles:

- Do no harm
- Strengthen the community's capacity to prevent violence
- Enhance legitimacy
- Offer help to those who want it
- Get deterrence right
- Use enforcement strategically and legitimately

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Other outreach activities implemented by or participated in by the SBPD to improve community engagement and involvement:

- Community cook outs & cook ins
- All Neighborhood meetings
- Walking/talking patrols
- School walks/talks/zones
- Reading in schools/Q&A school sessions/CTE program/K-9 demonstrations
- Community led panel discussions (roundtable and action group roundtables)
- Social media (Facebook and Twitter)
- Police Athletic League (over 900 kids in 2019 alone)
- Citizens' police academy
- Cadet program and internships
- Junior cadet program
- Cops & Goblins
- Roving roll calls (area & shift)
- Board of Public Safety meetings
- Monthly crime report meetings
- Neighborhood watch and alerts
- Shooting Response Team (SRT), Outreach-SAVE team
- Camera registry
- Pizza patrol
- Popsicle patrol
- Women's self-defense classes
- Shop with a Cop and red kettle ringing
- Park and play (basketball, catch, soccer, etc...)
- SBPD food pantry/Holiday baskets/"Elf"icers/Santa 'Cause'
- SBPD blood drive-medical foundation
- National Night Out, First Fridays, West-side Wednesdays, Best Week Ever
- ND athletic and social events including traffic and pedestrian safety
- Four Winds Field (numerous events throughout the year)

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Community Involvement

Community Action Group (CAG) meetings/roundtables

The SBPD has been able to develop stronger relationships with community members through various initiatives. One of the key initiatives is the CAG – Community Action Group. The CAG met weekly over the summer of 2019, but the SBPD has met in larger Community Roundtable sessions since 2018 with key community partners and leaders. Attendance at the CAG meetings has included community members, leaders, activists, advocates, and police officers. The purpose of the meetings is to have community involvement and discussion regarding key department policies. These policies include police pursuits, body cameras, training, recruiting, and use of force, the specific policies that our community wants to not only discuss but also in which to have investment. The CAG meetings allowed our community to make policy recommendations to the City of South Bend Board of Public Safety and Police. These meetings also presented a unique opportunity for our community members, including police officers, to be heard.

Community cookouts

In 2017, 2018 and 2019 our Strategic Focus Unit sponsored and facilitated several cookouts at different parks and neighborhoods throughout the city. These cookouts were attended by patrol officers, detectives, and command staff. Over BBQ and refreshments, the cookouts allowed people and officers to talk about problems or concerns in our community and how we can work together toward solutions. Officers also participated in basketball, frisbee, cornhole, flag football, and other games with kids.

Roving roll calls (RRC)

To increase officer accessibility, patrol officers are directed to different locations throughout the city to have roll calls. These roll calls are held at places such as businesses, churches, parks, and other public places. The different types of roving roll calls, area and shift, provide opportunities for community members to interact with the officers who work in the geographic area in which community members live and work. Area RRC's are solely attended by officers and supervisors who work in the specific geographic area of the RRC. Shift RRC's occur when the entire shift gathers at a designated location, and the entire shift participates in the RRC. With shift RRC's,

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community members get the opportunity to meet the entire shift regardless of the area in which they work, and officers get to meet and mingle with community members regardless of their geographic assignment.

Monthly crime report meetings

Each month the SBPD holds a monthly crime report meeting at the police department. These monthly meetings allow our community to be informed about crime trends and patterns and have personal interaction with SBPD officers; these are attended by and open to all members of our community. We also use Crime Reports and make it publicly accessible 24/7/365; this is updated every 7 hours and 45 minutes and published on our daily report logs, at the SBPD, and our website.

School walks, school zones and foot patrols

Day shift patrol officers are assigned to specific school zones. Each day, the officers proceed to their school zone where they interact with students and address any safety concerns within their school zone. Throughout the school day, based on availability via call volume, officers again proceed to their assigned zone and perform a walking patrol inside of the school, often eating lunch with students. Afternoon officers also head to their school zones when schools dismiss for the day.

Additionally, patrol officers on all shifts conduct regular foot patrols of the geographic areas to which they are assigned. The emphasis and expectation during the foot patrols is interaction with community members to address their concerns in a proactive way and to build mutual and stronger relationships with and from the initial or additional contact. As perspective, the SBPD did over 8,616 walk/talk patrols and 3,181 school zone walks/patrols in 2019.

Community Participation

Police Athletic League (PAL)

Throughout 2019 numerous events were held that allowed for community participation. A key to this is the participation of youths in our community. In summer 2019 alone, PAL engaged almost 500 youth in our community through sports programs such as boxing, tennis, football, basketball, swimming, and soccer. During the PAL program, kids are mentored and coached by officers from the SBPD, and youth and adults who were also

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once PAL participants and graduates. Notably, the PAL program has been in existence for over 20 years, born from the will and determination of retired South Bend officer Darryl Boykins (who still leads PAL every day), with literally thousands of kids in our community attending and successfully graduating our league.

Cops and Goblins

Each year around Halloween the SBPD partners with local businesses to hold an event for children in our community. Officers and businesses pass out candy to children and provide other information such as safety and wellness. This event is attended by several thousand community members including children and their parents. Officers also attend several other events where they interact with children and pass out candy. Around 6,500 people attend our event last year.

Citizens' Police Academy

Each year, the SBPD holds an academy for community members. The academy lasts for 10 weeks. During each weekly session different topics are presented by SBPD officers. The topics cover the innerworkings of the department from the perspective, experience and knowledge of each department division. Presentations include the Patrol Division, K-9 Unit, SWAT, Drug Investigation Unit, Training & Recruiting Division, Hostage Negotiation Team, Strategic Focus and Intel Unit, Bomb Squad, Internal Affairs, Detective Bureau and Command staff (to name a few). There is also discussion on department policies, procedures and training. Participants are exposed to scenario/incident-based training using the FATS machine which simulates use of force encounters (lethal and non-lethal). At the conclusion of the Citizen's Police Academy, attendees go on a ride along with patrol officers.

Results & Measures

In 2018, the City conducted a city-wide survey. The purpose of the survey was to help ensure that the city's priorities continue to match the needs and desires of residents. A random sample of 810 households completed the survey. The following includes a summary of resident satisfaction with city services, specific to the Police Department. The highest levels of satisfaction with City Police services, based upon the combined percentage of "very satisfied" and "satisfied" responses among residents who had an

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opinion, were: professionalism of Police officers (62%) and speed of Police response (58%). The two items respondents indicated should receive the most emphasis over the next two years were: “visibility of Police in neighborhoods” and feeling of “safety in neighborhoods.”

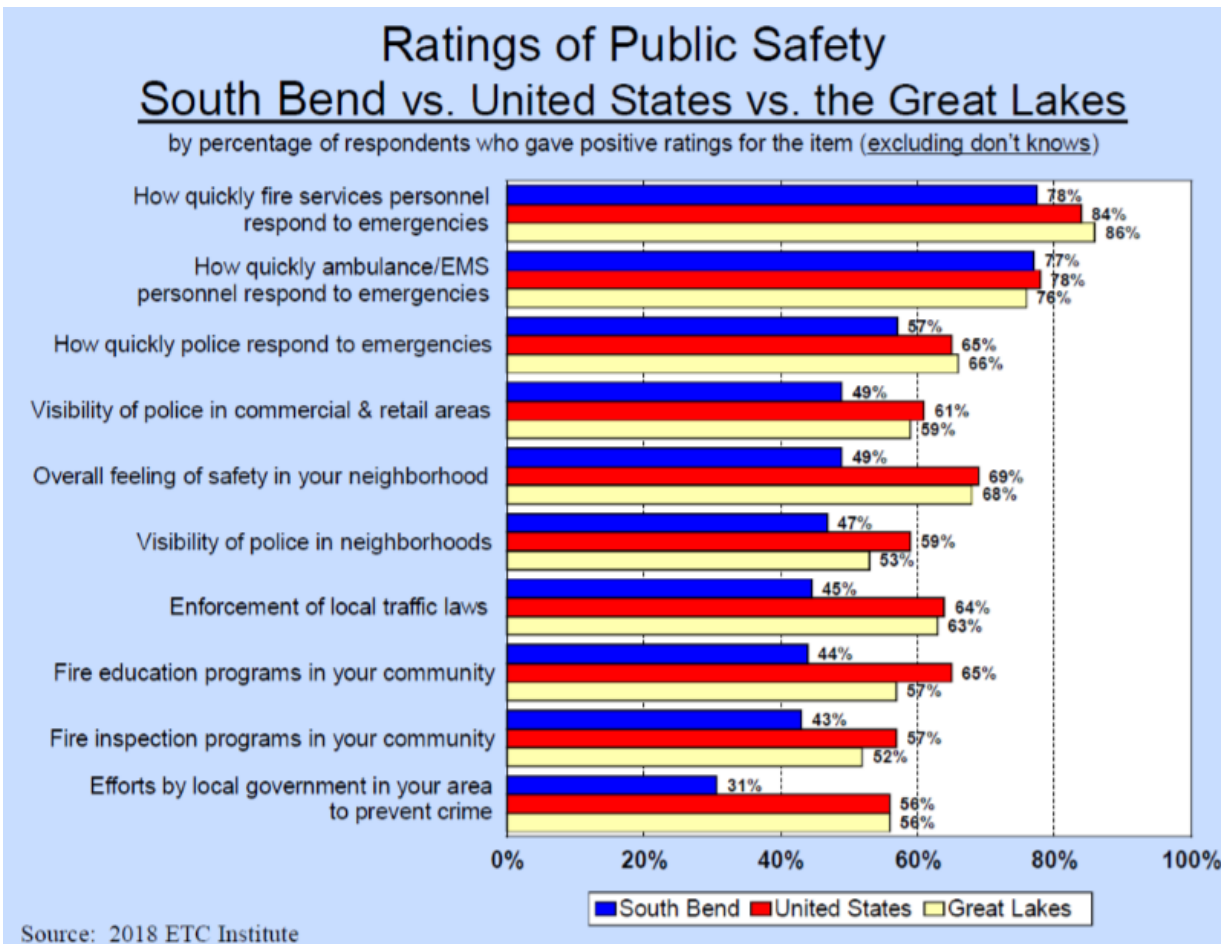
When comparing across all City services included in the survey, the overall quality of local Police protection received high priority from residents. This means that this service is both one that residents were less satisfied with currently and that they find very important for the City to focus on. The City survey was benchmarked against national data for comparison purposes and can be found below for Public Safety ratings.



The percentages below represent respondents who gave positive ratings for the topic, with South Bend displayed in blue.

The City of South Bend rates below national and regional averages for satisfaction with several Public Safety service factors, including overall feelings of safety, enforcement of local traffic laws, and government efforts to prevent crime. We want to work together to improve these ratings.

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We are prioritizing our work addressing the community’s concerns and are focusing on police visibility in neighborhoods, government efforts to prevent crime, and feelings of safety in neighborhoods.

We look forward to working with the community to make South Bend a safer, more vibrant place to live.

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