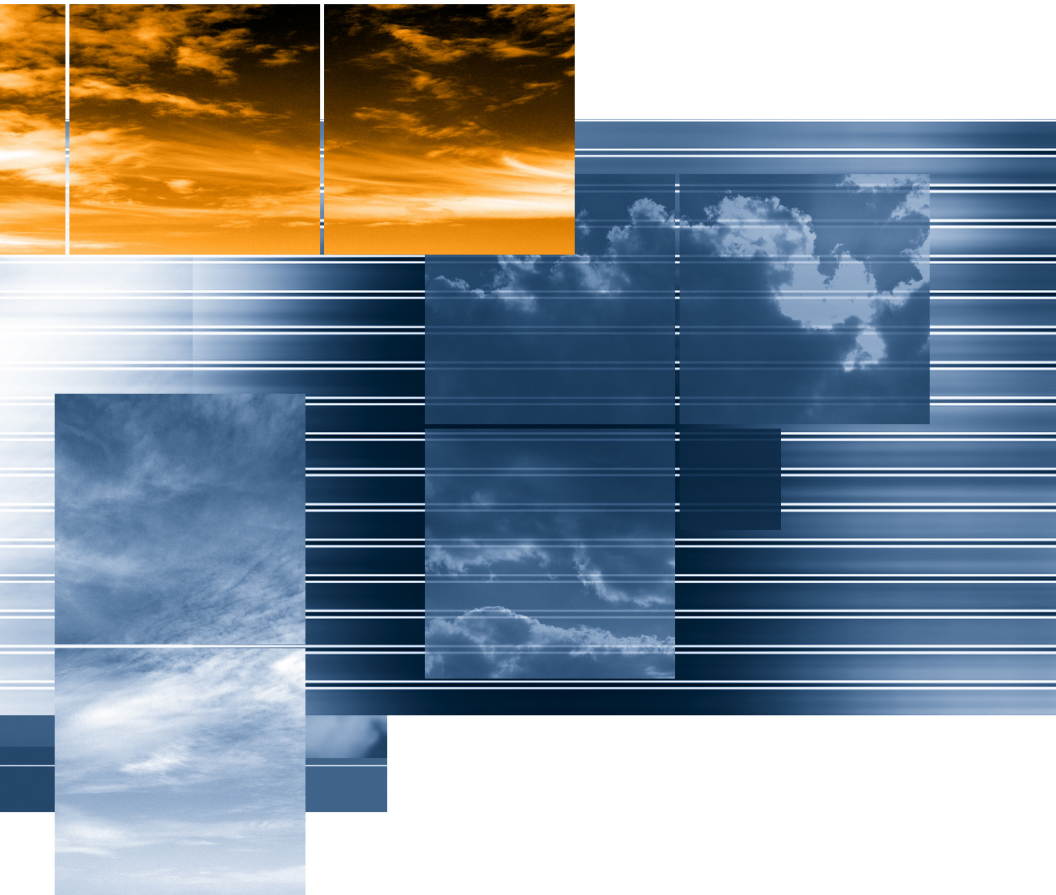




Community Policing: Looking to Tomorrow

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Community Policing: Looking to Tomorrow

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The opinions expressed are generally those based on the consensus of roundtable meeting participants; however, not every view or statement presented in this report can necessarily be attributed to each participant.

Web sites and sources listed provided useful information at the time of this writing, but the authors do not endorse any information of the sponsor organization or other information on the web sites.

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¹ See, e.g., Mastrofski, Willis, and Kochel (2007), and Fridell and Wycoff (2004). In recent years, the Department of Justice's Law Enforcement Management and Administrative Statistics and Local Police Department reports have detailed a range of community policing activities undertaken by local law enforcement agencies. Reports are available on the Bureau of Justice Statistics web site, www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/.

Executive Summary

In the early 1980s, a few progressive police departments were experimenting with a new approach to policing called community policing. These departments were trying to engage their community members with the police to jointly address recurring crime and disorder issues through problem-solving efforts. Twenty-five years later, community policing is the operating philosophy and approach to policing in most police departments across the United States.¹

Community Policing: Looking to Tomorrow presents the current state of community policing according to police chiefs and other police leaders who attended community policing roundtable meetings in the spring of 2007. Section I of this document presents these police leaders' views about what community policing looks like today and the challenges it faces, and summarizes their predictions about how community policing may evolve in the future. Section II of the document provides suggestions, based on the meetings, about how police departments and city leaders can work together to enhance their community policing efforts and continue to strive to take community policing to the next level.

Introduction

The voices of the police chiefs heard in this report are varied and reflect a broad policing experience. What the chiefs have in common is a continuing interest in delivering the best quality police service to the communities they serve. The chiefs have come to understand that community policing is quality police service, and that it reflects the highest ideals of policing in a democracy. Democracy is always challenging and often may seem untidy; delivering on the promise of community policing can have those same qualities. Nonetheless, when it comes to policing in a democracy, there is nothing better than community policing.

During the last 25 years, many police executives have defined community policing as their philosophy and approach to policing. They have worked diligently to instill the community policing philosophy and its principles in their agencies. Agencies committed to community policing develop partnerships with their community, address recurring crime and disorder issues through problem-solving techniques, and transform the organization to support these efforts. Through these actions, police departments seek to provide the community with the best policing services possible, to promote integrity within the department, and to increase trust and cooperation between the police and the people they serve.

How Did We Get Here?

Providing police services in America is essentially—and very important—locally organized and controlled. Historically, change in the nature and quality of police service has been more evolutionary than revolutionary. Community policing emerged on the scene during the 1980s in response to the realization by many police, community, and academic leaders that the police were not keeping pace with the complex and diverse nature of American society. This realization was preceded by and also led to a series of groundbreaking and sometimes controversial studies on police policies and operations.² The studies and related experimentation generally confirmed that although police services had become more technically adept, they were showing only minimal success in reducing crime and the fear of crime. Of particular concern was the continuing estrangement between the police and the poorest and most disenfranchised people they served. The philosophical construct of community policing has proved to be the best possible response to this concern. Community policing's emphasis on developing partnerships to address community crime and disorder problems and supporting that effort through organizational change has transformed American policing. It places a much stronger—and needed—focus on developing and maintaining trust and positive relationships between the police and all the people they serve. During the last 25 years, we have seen that community policing is well-grounded in democratic principles and will continue to be well-equipped to guide police services through complex criminal and social justice landscapes.

The success of community policing can be seen across the country in agencies that define community policing as their way of doing business. In fact, one is hard pressed to find a chief who does not support community policing or a mayor or city manager who does not list community policing as part of the job description for the city's police chief. Language referring to an agency's commitment to community policing also can be seen in mission statements, recruiting materials, business cards, web sites, and many other places.

Since the 1980s, police chiefs across the country have come to agree that three elements comprise the community policing philosophy: community partnerships, problem solving, and organizational transformation. While the precise wording of definitions may vary slightly from police department to police department and within academia, these three core elements have remained constant.

² Groundbreaking studies included the Kansas City Preventive Patrol Experiment (Kelling, Pate, Dieckman, and Brown, 1974), The Newark Foot Patrol Experiment (Police Foundation, 1981), and the Flint Neighborhood Foot Patrol Program (Trojanowicz and Banas, 1985), as well as research into rapid response to calls for services (Spelman and Brown, 1984), problem-solving techniques (see, e.g., Eck and Spelman, 1987; Goldstein, 1990), and the broken windows theory (Kelling and Wilson, 1982).

³This is how the U.S. Department of Justice Office of Community Oriented Policing Services defines Community Policing.

Community Policing Definition

Community policing is a philosophy that promotes organizational strategies, which support the systematic use of partnerships and problem-solving techniques, to proactively address the immediate conditions that give rise to public safety issues such as crime, social disorder, and fear of crime.

Source: U.S. Department of Justice Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 2008.³

Description of Community Policing

Community policing focuses on crime and social disorder through the delivery of police services that include aspects of traditional law enforcement, as well as prevention, problem solving, community engagement, and partnerships. The community policing model balances reactive responses to calls for service with proactive problem solving centered on the causes of crime and disorder. Community policing requires police and citizens to join together as partners in the course of both identifying and effectively addressing these issues.

Source: U.S. Department of Justice Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 2003.

⁴The White Plains Roundtable was held on February 27, 2007; the Arlington Roundtable was held on March 22, 2007; and the Richmond Roundtable was held on March 29, 2007.

⁵The PERF Annual Meeting session, titled “The Future of Community Policing—A Police Chief’s Roundtable,” was held on April 26, 2007

A quarter of a century into this philosophical change in policing, the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF), with support from the U.S. Department of Justice Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (the COPS Office), held a series of three 1-day regional roundtables with police chiefs and other policing leaders to discuss the status of community policing today—both in their agencies and in the broader national context. These roundtable meetings also focused on the challenges to advancing community policing and what lies ahead for community policing in the near future. The three roundtables were held in February and March 2007 in White Plains, New York; Arlington, Texas; and Richmond, California.⁴ More than 60 police chiefs, policing leaders, and academics attended the meetings. (For a list of participants, see the Appendix.) In addition to the roundtable meetings, a session on the challenges facing community policing was held at PERF’s Annual Meeting in April 2007.⁵ The annual meeting session provided an additional opportunity for chiefs and policing leaders to have their voices heard, particularly those who live outside of the three metropolitan areas where roundtable meetings were held.

Community Policing: Looking to Tomorrow is the result of these meetings. This publication is divided into two sections. The first section summarizes the meetings and reflects the comments, observations, and opinions of the participants and their discussions. The second section of this document, also based on the discussions at the meetings, focuses on how police and city leaders can continue to strengthen and add value to local community policing efforts.

Section I: Roundtable Findings

Community Policing Today

“Community policing has evolved and become more complex. Initially, I viewed it as the police department opening up and asking for the community’s input and opinion, and incorporating that into police operational practices and philosophy. Over time, my perception has gone through a couple of iterations. Most recently, it means looking at neighborhoods and how we impact them. Community policing today also involves more than the police. Other city agencies must work in partnership with the police and each other to help the community.”

– Chief Theron Bowman, Ph.D.,
Arlington (Texas) Police Department⁶

⁶The titles and agencies of the participants are those that were current at the time of the roundtable meetings. Several have since changed.

Roundtable meeting participants view community policing as quality police service—service that upholds democratic principles. As such, community policing seeks to improve public safety and the quality of life for all persons within the community. Yet police departments alone cannot do either of these things—and those that try are not successful. Rather, public safety and improving quality of life are the responsibility of both the police and the community. The community is identified as community-based organizations, businesses, individual community members, and other government agencies at all levels (e.g., municipal code enforcement or public works or state corrections agencies).

The 10 Principles of Community Policing

1. Change.
2. Leadership.
3. Vision.
4. Partnership.
5. Problem solving.
6. Equity.
7. Trust.
8. Empowerment.
9. Service.
10. Accountability.

Source: Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux, 1998.

Community policing today involves the police partnering with the community to address public safety issues and improve the quality of life. Police and the community work together to identify problems and to respond to community concerns and needs. These efforts help build community trust. Roundtable participants stressed that, as much as possible, police department efforts should focus on being proactive or co-active, instead of reactive. This includes taking steps to cultivate trusting partnerships in good times, instead of just during a crisis. It also involves looking at problems from a holistic perspective and analyzing them to identify trends or linkages. At the same time, these efforts do not diminish the ability of the police to pursue enforcement efforts to resolve public safety problems. Enforcement is an important tool in community policing—a point that participants felt was too often lost in the early days of community policing.

“Through community policing, the community and the police department help each other be successful.”

– Chief Heather Fong,
San Francisco (California) Police Department

Leadership has been essential to implementing community policing. It is important for community policing values to be well-articulated and for community policing behaviors to be continuously

modeled throughout the entire department—and not just by the chief. Community policing values and behaviors include concepts such as integrity, empathy, compassion, and trustworthiness. For the participants in the roundtable discussions conducted for this study, leadership means allowing staff members within the agency to become leaders within their own ranks and divisions and encouraging their professional development through continuing education, cross-training, and networking opportunities.

“For me, community policing comes down to three things: partnerships with businesses, the community, and other city departments; a problem-solving perspective; and accountability at all levels of the organization.”

– Chief Larry Boyd,
Irving (Texas) Police Department

Accountability and transparency were also stressed. Participants at the Richmond roundtable discussed the accountability of police chiefs to three groups: the community, local government (e.g., mayor or city manager and council members), and the police department. The challenge for a police chief is that each group has its own concerns and interests—which may or may not intersect with those of the other groups. Participants discussed transparency in sharing crime information with the public (e.g., through crime maps, web sites, e-mail trees, and listservs), jointly developing and sharing agency policies and procedures, and educating local government officials about the department and community policing.

The implementation of community policing has required a transformation within police departments to support the philosophy. These efforts include empowering officers and holding supervisors accountable for work within specific neighborhoods. To do this, officers must receive appropriate training in areas such as problem solving and supervisory support for working with the community on proactive efforts.

Current Challenges to Community Policing

Despite the advances in community policing and its widespread acceptance during the last 25 years, challenges still remain. To continue to make progress, the policing profession must address these challenges collectively. Participants at the roundtable meetings identified 10 present and future challenges to community policing and their efforts to advance it. These challenges focus on four areas: the department, the community, the municipality, and the nation.

Departmental Challenges

Challenge 1: Recruitment, Hiring, and Retention.

“A community policing agency must hire and promote people who embrace the philosophy. The philosophy should carry from one generation to the next.”

– Chief Brent Larrabee,
Stamford (Connecticut) Police Department

Recruiting, hiring, and retaining service-oriented officers is one of the biggest challenges facing the policing profession. Put simply, when departments are unable to do this they will face obstacles in maintaining, much less advancing, their community policing efforts. Many police departments across the county are operating with large staffing shortages. While some of these shortages are the result of budget cuts, others are caused by a lack of qualified candidates and by persons leaving the department for retirement, other law enforcement agencies, or other professions altogether. Participants noted that it is becoming increasingly challenging to fill police chief positions, as well.

Across the board, participants reported challenges in finding applicants for available police officer positions, so much so that one North Texas police department now pays people to apply to the department. In some parts of the country, these challenges become more acute because officer tests are offered infrequently. In New York, for example, many police departments rely on a test given once a year to identify potential officers. Police departments also face challenges in keeping persons interested in becoming a police officer throughout delays in the application process

⁷For further discussion and examples of creative ways to recruit service-oriented officers see Scrivner (2006).

(e.g., between testing and getting results and through background investigations). Participants agreed that to find quality candidates in the future, departments will need to continue to be innovative with their marketing and branding efforts so they can attract a diverse pool of candidates who reflect their changing communities.⁷ Additionally, in the face of these personnel shortages—some of which are severe—it is important, and easier said than done, to hire people who have the attitude and skills for community policing (e.g., problem solving, multitasking, service orientation, integrity, and interpersonal skills). These efforts remain essential to institutionalizing the community policing philosophy in the department.

Participants also discussed some of the challenges in retaining officers. These include long commutes, the lack of affordable housing in some urban areas, changing priorities as officers grow older and begin families, and officers looking for higher-paying departments. Some departments in North Texas report that switching to 12-hour shifts has helped somewhat by giving officers more days off. Meanwhile, some Northeast departments noted that their officers are becoming “burned out” because of long overtime hours. Northeast participants also discussed some of the challenges they face in keeping seasoned officers because some leave the department once they are eligible for full retirement benefits, often after 20 years of service.

Challenge 2: Reinforcing Community Policing.

“Supervisors need to be held accountable for their officers, but leadership must provide them with the resources to do their job.”

– Chief Francisco Ortiz,
New Haven (Connecticut) Police Department

Police departments continue to face challenges when it comes to reinforcing the community policing philosophy in their agency. Department executives must emphasize community policing through their behaviors and actions, while recognizing that their efforts alone will not institutionalize the philosophy. Participants at the roundtables discussed the important role that first-line supervisors play in supporting

community policing among line officers and how their resistance to community partnerships and problem-solving activities can severely harm the department's efforts. They agreed that supervisors need to be held accountable for their officers' community policing efforts and activities; yet they recognize that officers will concentrate on those areas in which they are evaluated. For example, officers who are evaluated based on tickets, or supervisors who are evaluated based on their officers' tickets, may be turned off to community policing because they feel they are not rewarded for their partnership and problem-solving efforts. In these instances, community policing can get in the way of the officer's success in the organization. Officer evaluations, therefore, need to reflect the transition from traditional policing to community policing. Additionally, officers should be recognized and rewarded for their community policing efforts.

"We need to have the right officers involved in field training. They can help new officers start off on the right foot."

– Commissioner Pat Carroll,
New Rochelle (New York) Police Department

Training can be used to reinforce community policing. Participants agreed that community policing concepts, such as accountability, problem solving, and partnering with the community, need to be incorporated throughout the training that officers receive, from academy to in-service training. For some officers, their training is not consistent with what the department asks of them. One way to make training more congruent with the department's mission is to conduct scenario training with community members. Participants also noted that community policing needs to be stressed and modeled by field training officers as they work with new officers. Additionally, ongoing training and education are needed to assist with professional development.

Participants stressed that what is taught in training must be adopted in practice by their officers in their day-to-day work. These efforts continue to align police department policies and practices with the community policing philosophy. As police departments continue to transform to meet the needs of community policing,

they should begin to examine organizational success through outcomes and not just outputs, such as arrests. This is a change in expectations that city leaders must support.

Challenge 3: Inability to Institute Change.

“Consistency is a challenge. I am the seventh commissioner in the last five years.”

– Commissioner David Chong,
Mount. Vernon (New York) Police Department

Instituting change can be difficult in community policing, and change is certainly slow in any police department or other large organization. For some chiefs, civil service rules and collective bargaining agreements may constrain the executive’s latitude in decision-making in areas such as hiring, promotions, and assignments. These areas need policies that support the transition from traditional policing to community policing. In addition, the short tenure of many chiefs can be an obstacle to community policing because the police department’s leadership may lack consistency. Consistency can be an important part of gaining trust with the community, and mutual trust between the community and the police is essential to successful community policing efforts.

Solving Agency Problems through SARA

At the Arlington roundtable, Carrollton (Texas) Chief David James discussed how his department started promoting problem solving (Community Problem Oriented Policing – CPOP) as a way to deal with issues and problems within the department. When an agency employee comes upon a problem in the organization, he or she is encouraged to apply the SARA (Scanning, Analysis, Response and Assessment) model of problem solving. Problem solving becomes a habit, and officers become accustomed to using the model to examine the causes of a problem, the possible responses that can be adopted, and how to assess their efforts. Agency employees have used SARA to examine problems ranging from internal organizational issues to reducing burglary of motor vehicles, reducing false alarms, registered sex offender accountability, and other issues related to community quality of life.

Community Challenges

Challenge 4: Disengaged Communities.

“The police department and the community each have their own roles and responsibilities and cannot be successful by themselves.”

- Chief Ronald Davis,
East Palo Alto (California) Police Department

Participants at the three roundtables discussed their concerns about reconnecting with disengaged communities and staying connected with often rapidly changing communities. When police departments are not able to connect with their community and engage its members in public safety matters, community policing efforts are hampered. Some of the challenges discussed at the meetings included how to hold the community accountable for its responsibilities in a community policing environment. Participants concluded that it is significantly easier to hold the police department accountable for its activities than to devise ways to hold the community accountable for its responsibilities.

Participants' concerns also revolved around how to engage people—many of whom have little free time—in community safety and quality-of-life initiatives. While technology—in the form of the agency's web site and its listservs—can provide transparency and communication with the public, participants noted that overreliance on technology could result in the department losing touch with segments of the community that are not technologically savvy or do not have access to the Internet.

Enhancing Communication via E-Mail in San Francisco

At the Richmond roundtable, San Francisco Chief Heather Fong and Lieutenant Charlie Orkes described the agency's efforts to use e-mails to enhance communication and information sharing with the community. District captains are required to send out weekly e-mails to the community detailing crime updates; some captains send these updates daily. The Captain's Weekly Community Newsletter has increased the amount of information that it provided and now often includes details about community events and activities. This communication function serves as a way for the police to share information with the community and for community members to share information with the police and each other.

In some communities, there still remains a general mistrust of police and an unwillingness among residents to share information about neighborhood crimes with the police. This information is essential to police enforcement activities as well as prevention efforts. While great strides have been made during the last 25 years, challenges still remain regarding neighborhood and popular culture influences that discourage working with the police. Participants also noted that further efforts will be needed to engage youths in public safety issues. Youths are a critical, yet often overlooked, segment of the community.

Engaging Youths in White Plains

At the White Plains roundtable, Commissioner Frank Straub talked about the City of White Plains' youth-police partnership training program. Following a youth-involved shooting in the city's largest public housing complex, representatives from the White Plains Police Department, Youth Bureau, and School District met with some of the involved youths and their parents. The meeting was quite challenging because the youths and their parents spoke openly about conflicts with the police and reported past incidents of hostile relations.

In response to the meeting, the city partnered with the North American Family Institute to develop and implement a youth-police partnership training program. The purpose of the program was to reduce arrests and violence among city teens while building a more positive relationship between youths and the police. Particular emphasis was placed on building stronger relationships between adolescents from the African-American and Hispanic communities and the police department.

The training program places youths and police officers in structured presentations and group learning experiences that create opportunities for the participants to explore and discuss their values, attitudes, and feelings about race, urban youth culture, and policing. Through a series of scenarios developed by the participants, police officers and youths identify behavior that can escalate situations and practice techniques to de-escalate problems and build effective communication. Follow-up interviews suggest that the program has improved interactions among police officers, adolescents, and their families in and around the public housing campus.

Municipality Challenges

Challenge 5: Funding Shortfalls.

“Even with staffing shortages, community policing is still a core part of how police do their job.”

– Chief Chris Magnus,
Richmond (California) Police Department

Funding shortages remain a challenge to sustaining community policing efforts. Many cities are experiencing budget shortfalls, and police departments are often among the agencies that need to cut their budgets. Decreasing budgets can result in fewer officers who can respond to calls for service, engage in crime-prevention efforts around identified problem areas, and maintain partnerships with the community. Some participants contended that these budget cuts and staffing shortages have left their officers “married to the radio,” responding to calls for service with little or no time left to develop community partnerships and examine and address longer term community problems. Others countered that some police departments use staffing shortages as a rationale to neglect community policing. Still other participants felt that, in light of decreased funding, further research needs to be conducted into how officers use their time; alternative ways to report incidents, such as by telephone or through the web; and further debate about what services police should and should not provide.

“City government must concentrate on its core business. That should be what makes people come to the city and stay there.”

– Chief Doug Kowalski,
McKinney (Texas) Police Department

Participants at the Arlington roundtable addressed funding challenges in a slightly different manner. They discussed the need for cities to return to and focus on their “core business.” In other words, what are those key things the city will focus on providing? Also, what services will the city decline to provide? These discussions demonstrated that, in an environment in which resources are limited, collaboration between city agencies becomes even more important in a municipality’s efforts to provide its community with the best services possible.

“We base budgets on calls for service, crime rates, and response times—not broader community-building activities. We need to develop a model for the cost and allocation of resources in community policing.”

– Dr. Richard Smith,
University of Texas—Arlington

Roundtable participants also discussed the challenges they face in budgeting for community policing. As their organizations have adopted the community policing philosophy and the agency's activities have become more focused on proactive responses and long-term solutions to community problems, the budgeting mechanism generally has remained the same. Participants questioned whether their current way of budgeting is outdated and inconsistent with the community policing philosophy and what changes need to be made to resource allocation—as well as ways of measuring outcomes (e.g., identifying qualitative outcome measures).

Challenge 6: Politics of Public Safety.

“If we see violent crime continue to rise and resources stagnate or diminish, then there will be strong pressure on police to react by focusing solely on enforcement. We need to demonstrate the need to continue to develop community policing.”

- Commissioner Frank Straub,
White Plains (New York)
Department of Public Safety

Short-term politics are a challenge to community policing. Participants noted that local elected leaders are often pushed by their constituencies to seek quick fixes to public safety issues. Similarly, newly-elected leaders often look to put their own mark on public safety issues and develop their own initiatives regardless of existing activities and their successes. Police chiefs expressed their concern that they are being pushed to be reactive rather than proactive by local leaders, especially regarding problems like increasing violent crime rates, gangs, and youth violence. Long-term efforts to effect change in public safety matters are often hard for police chiefs to sell to local elected leaders because they do not produce results quickly enough—yet these long-term solutions are a cornerstone of community policing.

“Education and outreach efforts with city managers about police work can do nothing but help the profession.”

- Commissioner William Connors,
Rye (New York) Police Department

Participants also discussed whether the policing profession is doing enough to educate local political leaders about community policing. Nearly all mayors and city managers want their community's police department to practice community policing, but many chiefs are not sure that city leaders have a clear understanding of what this means in real-world terms for the police department and the rest of city government. Many new police chiefs also would benefit from receiving training about the issues facing city leaders and their responsibilities. Education efforts must be ongoing because political leadership changes at the local level (as well as at the state and federal level) where policymaking can enhance or inhibit community policing efforts. These education efforts can also be helpful in clarifying the roles of the police chief and city management.

“One of the next steps in community policing is to develop throughout the profession a better understanding of politics: how it affects community decisions and the appropriate role of police in politics.”

– Chief Chris Magnus,
Richmond (California) Police Department

Participants also discussed how politics and policymaking remain a mystery to most officers within their organization—including some at high ranks. Educating officers about the effects of public policy on the department; how the department's budget is allocated; and the chief's accountability to the city manager or mayor, the community, and the department remains a current challenge to community policing.

Challenge 7: Poor Collaboration Between Local Government Agencies.

“Other city agencies need to get involved in community policing. The philosophy should be ingrained across the city.”

– Chief Tommy Ingram,
Colleyville (Texas) Police Department

Poor collaboration between city departments is a key challenge to advancing community policing. Police alone cannot solve public safety problems effectively, and one of the essential partners in community policing is other local municipal agencies. These agencies play

an important role in improving public safety and the quality of life in the community. Making that case to city leaders and other department heads has been a challenge for some police chiefs.

Participants stressed the need for the rest of the city to embrace the service orientation that underlies the community policing philosophy. Participants believe that to address community issues, city departments must collaborate with each other and the community in problem-solving efforts to address specific community problems. City departments can no longer operate as distinct silos; rather, they must realize that each specializes in an area that contributes to the community's overall quality of life.

"It is important for us to have a partnership with cities where our transit system has stops. First we need cooperation, and then we jointly work together to solve problems."

– Chief James Spiller,
Dallas (Texas) Area Rapid Transit Police

In areas where there are large numbers of police departments or other regional agencies that serve the community, participants stressed that collaboration across the region is especially important. These relationships often need to expand beyond the city itself to include other regional police departments and government entities (e.g., other municipalities and counties and the state).

Nationwide Challenges

Challenge 8: Policymaking.

Policymaking at the all levels of government—local, state, and federal—can affect police department policies and procedures, as well as the department's relationship with the community by dictating through statute the activities and tasks that police departments are required or prohibited to undertake. Policymaking can have a positive effect on police departments and their relationship with various segments of the community or it can have negative consequences. Furthermore, lack of political leadership on pressing issues can prove troublesome and confusing for local police departments. Participants' discussions of

polymaking focused on two main areas of concern: immigration enforcement and offender reentry.

“The word constitutionality is in our mission statement. Our activities and policies need to uphold constitutional rights.”

– Chief David James,
Carrollton (Texas) Police Department

Participants at the Irving and Richmond roundtables voiced their concerns about the growing debate about the role of local law enforcement in immigration enforcement.⁸ These concerns included what effects local policies—such as city or county ordinances and enforcement training by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)—may have on the department’s relationship with immigrant communities. Many chiefs are concerned about policies that can foster mistrust and fear of the police in immigrant communities. They worry that these policies could lead to a citizen’s greater unwillingness to report being a victim of a crime. Furthermore, the chiefs also discussed their concerns about the community not understanding the difference between the local police department and ICE. Overall, participants stressed that they want to ensure that their department is acting in a manner that upholds both the state and federal Constitutions.

“Returning offenders are the biggest issue we are facing. This truly is a public safety issue.”

– Chief Steve Krull,
Livermore (California) Police Department

Participants at the Richmond roundtable discussed in detail some of the issues facing California’s immense prison population. The chiefs recognize that nearly all of the state’s prisoners will eventually be released back to the community and they are concerned about these offenders’ ability to reintegrate successfully. They talked about the need for criminal justice agencies to work with social service providers to decrease the likelihood that a person will relapse.⁹ Participants also talked about the need for political leadership, especially when it comes to reexamining the way the criminal justice system operates.

⁸For a further discussion of policing and immigration issues see International Association of Chiefs of Police (2007b).

⁹The Council of State Governments and the Police Executive Research Forum—with support from the COPS Office—developed a toolkit for law enforcement agencies to plan and assess their reentry efforts. Planning and Assessing a Law Enforcement Reentry Strategy was released in 2008. The COPS Office has also funded reentry research by the Urban Institute and the International Association of Chiefs of Police. See La Vigne, Solomon, Beckman, and Dedel (2006) and International Association of Chiefs of Police (2007a).

Challenge 9: Making the Case for “Community Policing.”

“When I came to my department, I tried to stay away from buzz words. I put it simply—the focus is on good police work.”

– Chief Sidney Fuller,
Farmers Branch (Texas) Police Department

Community policing is quality police service, and it should be discussed as such. Despite this agreement, challenges remain, and some police officers resist the transition to community policing. To this day, the term community policing in some departments is still problematic; because community policing includes elements that go beyond enforcing the law, some officers consider it “soft” or “not real policing.” Yet its principles and elements are generally accepted. To counter some of the push-back from officers, some chiefs at the roundtable simply have referred to this style of policing as quality policing or simply good police work.

“Academies are emphasizing the edicts the profession is receiving—homeland security and intelligence—not problem solving or community policing.”

– Chief Betsy Hard,
Bloomfield (Connecticut) Police Department

“Information is our currency, yet to get information we must be trusted.”

– Chief Richard Melton,
Napa (California) Police Department

Participants also briefly discussed homeland security.¹⁰ They agreed without question that community policing serves the mission of homeland security, but felt this view has not been adequately conveyed to elected officials at all levels of government. Instead, they feel that the government’s focus—and some police academies’ focus—has been placed much more heavily on tactics and equipment in recent years. To sustain and advance community policing, the focus needs to remain on developing partnerships and addressing recurring crime and disorder issues collaboratively through problem-solving techniques. Roundtable chiefs also stressed that without trusting relationships with the community, local police will not have actionable intelligence—intelligence that can prevent crimes,

¹⁰ For further discussions about community policing and homeland security see Murphy and Plotkin (2003); Davies and Murphy (2004); and Scheider, Chapman, and Seelman (2003).

including terrorist acts, from occurring. Roundtable participants concluded that the profession needs to improve its marketing of community policing and communicate more effectively to elected officials that the community policing model works. For it to be successful in addressing public safety matters and improving community quality of life, though, community policing needs to be nurtured through funding and long-term support from all levels of government.

Challenge 10: Traditional and Nontraditional News Media.

“As a profession we do not invest as much as we should in working with the media, nor have we orchestrated a way to market community policing. When it gets covered, it is pretty much by accident.”

- Chief Chris Magnus,
Richmond (California) Police Department

Participants also noted some of the problems they face in working with the news media and in communicating the importance of community policing. These challenges include how to get positive news covered, how to get stories covered accurately, and how to work with the unofficial media, such as blogs and YouTube. People increasingly turn to unofficial media sources for both information and entertainment, and they trust these sources. Participants agreed that more time and effort needs to be given to the police department’s relationship with the media so that accurate, relevant information reaches the public in a timely fashion. These efforts shed light on the police department and its activities. Agency transparency is important in community policing because it contributes to community trust and confidence in the police.

Advancing Community Policing

“One of my greatest challenges is ensuring that community policing moves forward. It is who we are and what we do. It isn’t who other departments are yet. As police officers and experts on the community policing philosophy, we need to take a leadership role and show other departments what the community orientation is all about.”

- Chief Theron Bowman, Ph.D.,
Arlington (Texas) Police Department

¹¹ PERF, with funding support from the COPS Office, has developed a document on community governance: *Advancing Community Policing through Community Governance: A Framework Document*. It will be published in 2009.

¹² For a further discussion about the role of mayors in advancing community policing, see Chapman and Scheider (2006, p. 3-4).

The participants at the community policing roundtables discussed where community policing should go from here and how to strengthen it and take it to the next level. The chiefs see community policing advancing to community governance in the coming years. Community governance takes the principles and elements of community policing city-wide.¹¹ For any community, this means that community orientation cannot reside solely in the police department, but rather must be embraced across the city by all agency staff members, managers, and executives, as well as elected leaders.

“City managers need to stress with all city departments that we are here to serve the public. The future is in partnering together.”

– Chief David James,
Carrollton (Texas) Police Department

In cities operating under a community governance philosophy, departments work collaboratively with the public to address community problems and issues. With leadership from mayors, city managers, council members, and police chiefs, city departments can begin to develop a holistic approach to addressing public safety issues and improving the quality of life in specific neighborhoods and throughout the city.¹² Through education and training, city departments can develop an understanding of the community policing philosophy and operationalize what it means for various city agencies (e.g., where roles and responsibilities intersect and what being responsive, transparent, and accountable means to each agency and the city).

“The discussion needs to be moved to community-based government. CompStat should be used city-wide to engage other departments to look at community issues and problems.”

– Chief Ronald Davis,
East Palo Alto (California) Police Department

Participants stressed that the move to community governance will be a slow, incremental transition, just as community policing was in police departments. The policing profession has learned a lot about how to garner support for the community orientation and can draw on the lessons learned from community

policing. For example, the city must build capacity within individual departments as well as within the community. This includes focusing on certain skill sets, such as developing partnerships, problem solving, and conflict resolution. Participants also noted that tools such as CompStat and geographic information system-based mapping, which are used in many police departments across the country, have the potential to be used at a city-wide level to assist municipal departments as they identify problems, coordinate efforts, or plan for the future.

Building Capacity in Irving, Texas

At the Arlington roundtable, Irving (Texas) Chief Larry Boyd discussed how the City of Irving is taking steps to build capacity in support of community governance. Chief Boyd noted that the city must build the capacity to develop partnerships and work collaboratively on community problems before it rolls out any specific programs or efforts. In Irving, capacity-building occurred during the course of approximately 1 year and took the form of training city department heads and their senior staffs on the SARA model of problem solving, as well as how to work collaboratively on problem-solving efforts. Once city employees were well-versed in the language and techniques, city departments began engaging community members in one Irving neighborhood to address community problems. At a community engagement held in February 2007, city department representatives facilitated small group discussions among community members and city employees. This is a work in progress for Irving—one that it believes has been successful thus far, thanks to the up-front efforts to build capacity.

Summary of Findings

Participants at the roundtables clearly reported that community policing is alive, well, and strong—both in its philosophy and what it means operationally for police departments. Participants agreed that community policing is quality policing in a democracy, and the profession needs to communicate this more clearly and effectively with elected leaders and department personnel. Although participants identified a number of current challenges to community policing, none is insurmountable. In fact, the chiefs believe that with strong leadership from police chiefs and clear support from mayors and city managers, these challenges can be addressed and have the potential to become opportunities for advancement. As the chiefs look forward to the next 5 to 10 years, they see the field taking the elements and principles of community policing—along with the lessons learned during the last 25 years—to the rest of city government. With consistent, forward-looking leadership from police chiefs and city leaders, these chiefs believe that the result will not only be stronger community policing, but also an entire city structure that is more collaborative, responsive to problems, transparent, and accountable to the community.

Section II: Next Steps in Community Policing

The chiefs' discussions at the community policing roundtables highlighted the fact that community policing is still evolving in police departments across the country. As police and city leaders look to tomorrow and plan how they most effectively can meet the needs of their continually changing communities, they should seek ways to work collaboratively with their communities to address crime and disorder problems and to sustain those efforts at improving the community's quality of life over time. This section discusses important areas of consideration for police chiefs and city leaders as they engage in strategic thinking about the future of their police department and city. The recommendations were gleaned from the discussions at the roundtable meetings. They focus on areas that police and city leaders should consider when asking themselves, "Where are we now, and where do we want to be in the future?"

Exert leadership. Consistent, progressive leadership is necessary to advance community policing to the next level. The police chief and agency leaders must convey the fact that community policing is not a short-lived program, but rather a philosophical approach to delivering police services in a democracy. Community policing is the agency's way of conducting business that has the full support of the police department and city leadership. Police chiefs should demonstrate their commitment and leadership by addressing organizational barriers that impede the department's and the individual officer's ability to engage in partnership and problem-solving activities.

Ensure that rank-and-file officers support the community policing philosophy. Agency officers are the front-line of community policing. These officers work directly with the public and should have the authority to develop partnerships and solve recurring crime and disorder problems. Agencies need to stress to new officers—throughout recruitment, training, and in their daily service—that the agency adheres to the community policing philosophy. Through the recruitment process, departments should seek to adopt screening processes that select-in persons who have a

service orientation and are committed to community policing, rather than merely selecting-out so-called bad apples. Since new officers are strongly influenced by their field training officers and sergeants, persons in these leadership positions should epitomize a model officer in the department. To make sure officers remain committed to community policing, agencies need to ensure that policies and procedures are congruent with the community policing philosophy: officers are evaluated in a community policing context; officers with exemplary problem-solving and partnership activities receive commendations for their successes; and officers who can serve as role models to others in the agency and have exhibited leadership are promoted.

Cultivate a new generation of leaders. Police department and city leaders should support professional and leadership development at all levels and ranks of the police department. The department should take advantage of training opportunities not only to improve specific skills of their officers and civilian personnel, but also to increase their leadership abilities. Many of these opportunities currently focus on the highest ranks in the organization (e.g., FBI National Academy and PERF's Senior Management Institute for Police). Leadership development for midlevel managers (e.g., sergeants and lieutenants) also is important, although harder to come by. The policing profession must continue to develop and support professional development through leadership training, networking opportunities, and other pursuits that encourage cross-fertilization of ideas and ongoing education. These opportunities will help nurture and develop the next generation of police leaders committed to community policing.

Engage the community in a recommitment to the principles of community policing. Many police departments see an ebb and flow in the engagement of the community in community policing. When the public feels safe and is not concerned about crime and disorder issues, it often is less active than when there are pressing concerns about crime and disorder after a critical incident occurs. At these times of relative calm, police departments need to continue to engage the community in public safety efforts and stress mutual accountability and responsibility for crime and disorder issues. Likewise, the police department should continue

to reach out to communities that have historically been less engaged in order to develop trust between the community and the police. These groups may include youths, minority communities, and residents of specific geographic areas.

Assess current community policing efforts. Police departments need to make an honest assessment of the status of their problem-solving and community partnership efforts, as well as the organizational changes they have implemented to support these activities. One way to do this is to utilize the COPS Office's community policing self-assessment tool. This tool operationalizes the philosophy of community policing and allows agencies to measure and evaluate their implementation efforts across three elements (community partnerships, problem solving, and organizational transformation) and associated subelements. This tool helps to identify the strengths and weaknesses in a department's community policing efforts and will serve as an indispensable resource for police departments and sheriffs' offices.¹³

Engage in activities that support a broader community governance approach to public safety. Police chiefs should continue to take steps to collaborate with other city agencies on efforts that improve community quality of life and they should engage other municipal agencies and their leadership in public safety efforts. Together with city leadership, police departments should take a leadership role in supporting the implementation of community governance—the application of the principles and elements of community policing at the city-wide level. The department's leadership role can take a number of forms, such as educating other city departments, training other agencies on specific skills sets, participating in cross-training activities, engaging in collaborative problem-solving activities with the community and other municipal agencies, sharing lessons that the agency has learned as it implemented community policing, and other activities jointly identified by the department and city leadership.

Institutionalize and sustain efforts. Frequent changes in both police department and city leadership can be an impediment to the implementation of community policing. During challenging times, short-term, reactive

¹³ Caliber, an ICF International Company; PERF; and the COPS Office recently developed a community policing self-assessment tool for police departments to assess their efforts at implementing community policing. *Community Policing Self-Assessment Tool: Documenting Today and Planning for Tomorrow – A User's Guide* will be published in 2009.

responses to public safety challenges may be preferred over proactive, long-term measures that show success at a much slower pace (yet are potentially more sustainable over time). City leaders should expand their focus to include long-term goals and efforts that may extend beyond their own tenure. To the extent possible, police and city leaders should seek to make community policing and community governance part of the police department and city-wide agency culture through internal organizational changes (e.g., hiring, reward systems, promotion systems, and policies and procedures) and through engagement efforts with the community (e.g., partnerships and problem-solving efforts). When these efforts are institutionalized in the community and within the city, residents likely will not accept any other style of policing and local governance.

Conclusion

Police department and city leaders who engage in strategic thinking about the preceding topical areas will be able to quickly get a general sense of where their department and city are, and where they are most likely to move in the future. Examining the police department's activities in these areas, as well as local political support for these efforts, can help highlight gaps in the implementation of community policing and help identify the department's next steps in further institutionalizing the community policing philosophy within the agency. This review can also assist with city leaders' efforts to implement community partnerships, problem-solving efforts, and organizational change throughout the city structure. While community policing has matured and evolved during the last 25 years, more remains to accomplish to take community policing to its next level and bring it closer to its ideal.

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About PERF

The Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) is a national organization of progressive law enforcement chief executives from city, county, and state agencies who collectively serve more than half of the country's population. Established in 1976 by 10 prominent police chiefs, PERF has evolved into one of the leading police think tanks. With membership from many of the largest police departments in the country and around the globe, PERF has pioneered studies in such fields as community and problem-oriented policing, racially biased policing, multijurisdictional investigations, domestic violence, the police response to people with mental illnesses, homeland security, management concerns, use of force, and crime-reduction approaches. To learn more about PERF, visit www.policeforum.org.

About COPS

The Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (the COPS Office) is an innovative agency that has been the driving force in advancing community policing throughout the nation. The COPS Office has a unique mission to directly serve the needs of local law enforcement, and COPS Office grant programs and products respond specifically to those needs.

The COPS Office was created through the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994. As a component of the Justice Department, the mission of the COPS Office is to advance the practice of community policing as an effective strategy to improve public safety. Moving from a reactive to proactive role, community policing represents a shift from more traditional law enforcement practices. By addressing the root causes of criminal and disorderly behavior, rather than simply responding to crimes once they have been committed, community policing concentrates on preventing both crime and the atmosphere of fear it creates. Additionally, community policing encourages the use of crime-fighting technology and operational strategies and the development of mutually beneficial relationships between law enforcement and the community. By earning the trust of the members of their communities and making those individuals stakeholders in their own safety, law enforcement can better understand and address the community's needs, and the factors that contribute to crime.

The COPS Office awards grants to state, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies to hire and train community policing professionals, acquire and deploy cutting-edge crime-fighting technologies, and develop and test innovative policing strategies. COPS Office funding provides training and technical assistance to advance community policing at all

levels of law enforcement, from line officers to law enforcement executives, as well as others in public safety. Because community policing is inclusive, COPS training also reaches state and local government leaders and the citizens they serve. The COPS Office has compiled an unprecedented array of knowledge and training resources on community policing. This includes topic-specific publications, training curricula, and resource CDs. All COPS Office-developed materials are available as resources to law enforcement and their partners.

- Since 1994, the COPS Office has invested more than \$12 billion to add community policing officers to the nation's streets, enhance crime fighting technology, support crime prevention initiatives, and provide training and technical assistance to help advance community policing.
- Nearly 500,000 law enforcement personnel, community members, and government leaders have been trained through COPS Office-funded training organizations.
- The COPS Office has distributed more than 1.2 million knowledge resource products (i.e., publications, training curricula, white papers, etc.) dealing with a wide range of community policing topics and issues.
- At present, approximately 81 percent of the nation's population is served by law enforcement agencies practicing community policing.
- By the end of FY 2008, the COPS Office had funded approximately 117,000 additional officers to more than 13,000 of the nation's 18,000 law enforcement agencies across the country in small and large jurisdictions alike. The most recent survey of COPS Office grantees indicated that approximately 109,581 of these officers have been hired.



Appendix: Roundtable Meeting Participants

White Plains, New York
February 27, 2007

- Deputy Commissioner Cedric Alexander
New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services
- Chief James Bradley
White Plains (New York) Police Department
- Captain David Burpee
White Plains (New York) Department of Public Safety
- Commissioner Pat Carroll
New Rochelle (New York) Police Department
- Commissioner David Chong
Mt. Vernon (New York) Police Department
- Chief John Comparetto
Passaic County (New Jersey) Sheriff's Department
- Commissioner William Connors
Rye (New York) Police Department
- Deputy Chief Neil Dryfe
Hartford (Connecticut) Police Department
- Carlos Fields
U.S. Department of Justice Office of Community Oriented Policing
Services
- Assistant Chief Anne FitzSimmons
White Plains (New York) Police Department
- Deputy Chief Frank Fowler
Syracuse (NY) Police Department
- Chief Michael Geraci
Schenectady (New York) Police Department
- Chief Betsy Hard
Bloomfield (Connecticut) Police Department

- Chief Patrick Harnett (ret.)
Hartford (Connecticut) Police Department
- Chief Robert Hertman
Wallkill (New York) Police Department
- Jim Isenberg
North American Family Institute
- Kevin Kennedy
Westchester County (New York) District Attorney’s Office
- Judith Kornberg, Ph.D.
John Jay College of Criminal Justice
- Chief Brent Larrabee
Stamford (Connecticut) Police Department
- Deputy Commissioner Byron Lockwood
Buffalo (New York) Police Department
- Brian Nickerson, Ph.D.
Pace University
- Chief Francisco Ortiz
New Haven (Connecticut) Police Department
- Captain James Quinn
Ramapo (New York) Police Department
- Chief Merritt Rahn
Greece (New York) Police Department
- Marilyn Simpson
New York-New Jersey Regional Center for Public Safety Innovations
- Commissioner Frank Straub
White Plains (New York) Department of Public Safety
- Chief Thomas Sweeney
Glastonbury (Connecticut) Police Department
- Al Thompson
New York-New Jersey Regional Center for Public Safety Innovations
- Detective Lieutenant Ron Walsh
Nassau County (New York) Police Department

Arlington, Texas

March 22, 2007

- Chief Mitch Bates
Garland Police Department
- Chief Theron Bowman, Ph.D.
Arlington Police Department
- Chief Larry Boyd
Irving Police Department
- Chief Barbara Childress
Richland Hills Police Department
- Chief Tom Cowan
Burleson Police Department
- Chief Sidney Fuller
Farmers Branch Police Department
- Assistant Chief Ricardo Gomez
University of Texas – Arlington Police Department
- Chief Tommy Ingram
Colleyville Police Department
- Chief David James
Carrollton Police Department
- Interim Chief Russ Kerbow
Lewisville Police Department
- Chief Doug Kowalski
McKinney Police Department
- Gilbert Moore
U.S. Department of Justice Office of Community Oriented Policing Services
- Chief Jimmy Perdue
North Richland Hills Police Department
- Deputy Chief Rhonda Robertson
Forth Worth Police Department
- Nancy Siegel
City of Tulsa (Oklahoma)
- Richard Smith, Ph.D.
University of Texas – Arlington
- Chief James Spiller
Dallas Area Rapid Transit Police

Richmond, California

March 29, 2007

- Chief Bill Bowen
Rio Vista Police Department
- Chief Ronald Davis
East Palo Alto Police Department
- Chief Heather Fong
San Francisco Police Department
- Captain Alec Griffin
Richmond Police Department
- Chief Susan Jones
Healdsburg Police Department
- Chief David Krauss
Tracy Police Department
- Chief Steve Krull
Livermore Police Department
- Chief Chris Magnus
Richmond Police Department
- Deputy Chief Ed Medina
Richmond Police Department
- Chief Richard Melton
Napa Police Department
- Chief Don Mort
Dixon Police Department
- Lieutenant Charlesws
San Francisco Police Department
- Tony Ribera, Ph.D.
University of San Francisco
- Chief Walter Tibbet
Alameda Police Department
- Captain Diane Urban
San Jose Police Department



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