

Riverdale Park Police Department Community Policing Plan

Definitions:

Community Policing is a philosophy that promotes organizational strategies that 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.

Crime Prevention is the anticipation, recognition and appraisal of a crime risk and the initiation of some action to remove or reduce it.

Target Hardening is the taking of some action to make a person, place or thing more resistant to criminal opportunity.

Section I

1) Community Partnerships:

The Riverdale Park Police Department maintains collaborative partnerships with individuals and organizations to develop solutions to problems and build positive community relationships. Examples of community partners include:

- Multidenominational/multi- faith based organizations
- Retail business owners
- Corporate and industrial facilities within the community
- Local health care providers
- County Health Department
- Department of Emergency Services
- Service clubs and benevolent organizations
- Citizen community groups
- Local Scouting groups
- Commission On Aging

2) Problem Solving:

The Riverdale Park Police Department makes every effort to be accessible to the community through the use of social media and personal contact with citizens. In addition to strategic enforcement efforts to combat crime trends and address public concerns, the agency will also provide proactive options that empower citizens to accept their role in community safety. Thoughtful communication between police and the community is critical to success in all aspects of community policing in Riverdale Park.

3) Organizational Adaptation and Program Lifespan:

As the needs of the community change, the proactivity of the agency must adapt to new challenges. Specific programs, which target current community problems, will be tailored to that need and will only run for the duration of their effectiveness. Often, a particular program may become a mainstay in the community policing efforts of the agency as long as there is a consistent and ongoing need to continue it.

Periodic assessments will be conducted of all community policing programs to determine their effectiveness and value. Those deemed to be no longer effective will be discontinued in favor of a more suitable programming option. Current programs and their established goals are contained in this plan.

Section II

1) Target Groups and Needs Assessment:

The Riverdale Park Police Department will identify the community needs in a number of ways. These include:

- Calls for service
- Community input and information exchange
- Observations of Crime Trends locally and beyond the local level

Calls for service can be one obvious indicator that a concentrated effort may be needed. This effort could be something as simple as raising awareness about the specific problem through the use of social media and public service announcements, or it could require a greater target hardening approach such as facilitating a Neighborhood or Business Watch in the target area. \

Resident input and information exchange often occurs during casual communications between officers and residents. It may also occur at community meetings and functions where agency personnel are present. Regardless of the communication venue any information exchange with law enforcement and the public is quite valuable. This is especially true when dealing with the resident's perception and fear of crime. All law enforcement must understand that the community's perception of a crime problem is just as real to them as statistically/physically provable crimes. Programs such as the Chief's Community Advisory Committee (CCAC) and other police/citizen cooperatives are very efficient ways to hear and address these concerns.

An observation of crime trends is always important when developing a proactive approach to safeguard citizens. The trends seen in surrounding areas and nationally can often be a guide to the near-future needs of the local community. Although it is important for law enforcement to monitor information being relayed through official state and national law enforcement communications, it is also important to monitor the media's portrayal of criminal activity so that citizen fears and concerns can be somewhat anticipated.

2) Implementation of Programing:

It is the goal of the Riverdale Park Police Department to implement proactive programming, which empowers the citizens and strengthens the community as a whole. Each and every Crime Prevention/Crime Reduction strategy must raise awareness regarding the identified problem and contain target hardening components to make residents and their property more resistant to crime. Residents must be afforded the opportunity to learn about and understand the crime risks they face. This understanding, along with suggestions and personal security strategies can help reduce overall community victimization.

Section III

The following are current community policing/crime prevention programs of the Riverdale Park Police Department

Chief's Community Advisory Committee (CCAC)

The Chief's Community Advisory Committee (CCAC) is a group of 10 members of the Riverdale Park community. We have 9 adult residents or business owners and 1 high school student. The committee hopes to facilitate open, honest, and direct interactions between the residents of Riverdale Park and their police department.

The main purpose of the CCAC is simply to facilitate communication between the Riverdale Park community and the Police. More specifically, the CCAC aims to educate the community about services provided by the Riverdale Park Police and engage the community on community-oriented policing programs. The CCAC also educates the Police Department about needs within the community. The CCAC may also provide feedback to the Police Department regarding planned law enforcement priorities and programs.

Any adult resident of Riverdale Park is eligible to serve on the CCAC. There is space as well on the CCAC for a high school student living in Riverdale Park. If you are not a resident of Riverdale Park, but still have sufficient interests within Riverdale Park e.g. own a business, you may serve on the CCAC as well.

Public Safety Community Walks

Throughout the year the Riverdale Park Police Department holds Public Safety Community Walks in each of the six political districts or wards of the town. Elected officials and members of the community are invited to attend.

The purpose of the walks is to address quality of life issues that are discovered, and ensure they are addressed by the appropriate department of the town government. These issues are wide ranging, they include criminal activity, code enforcement issues and matters that need addressing by the public works department.

These walks allow members of the community to interact with members of the police department, elected officials and neighbors. It is also a great opportunity for new residents to meet their neighbors and members of the police department.

Community Roll Calls

Community Roll Calls are another venue that allows members of the community to interact with their elected official, neighbors and members of the Riverdale Park Police Department. These events are held in strategic locations throughout the year and differ from the community walks since they are informative in nature.

Topics presented include police community relations, crime prevention, and crime statistics. Guest speakers are also brought in from other areas of public safety for presentations in their specialties.

National Night Out

The Riverdale Park Police Department's National Night Out celebration is one of the highlights of the year. These events are always well attended, and they give the community a chance to interact with members of the police department, neighbors, and elected officials.

Neighborhood Watch:

The Riverdale Park Police Department services and assists neighborhoods, apartment buildings and gated communities with starting and maintaining Neighborhood Watch programs. These programs are established using an owner-operator approach, meaning that the community is meaningfully given ownership of their program and its operational plan. With the individual Neighborhood Watch programs being owned and operated by the community they serve, the residents quickly develop a sense of buy-in and will subsequently tailor the operations to the needs and conveniences of the active membership.

The goal of all Neighborhood Watch programs is to heighten citizen awareness, enhance citizen communications between one another and facilitate timely reporting of suspected criminal activity to law enforcement.

Crime Prevention for the Individual Presentation

This presentation addresses the way a citizen can reduce their likelihood of becoming a victim of crime while going about their daily activities. This presentation focuses on personal safety, vehicle safety and home safety. It encourages the citizen to look at themselves and how they can become a harder target for a criminal. This presentation also addresses the citizen's fear of crime in their community. The Riverdale Park Police Department delivers this presentation to various community groups, businesses and faith based organizations upon request.

The goal of these presentations is to enhance citizen understanding of current personal security threats and provide techniques to reduce the opportunity for victimization.

Public Services Announcements:

The Riverdale Park Police Department uses PSA's as an additional tool in delivering important information to the community. PSA's are delivered via the Town's web page, Twitter, Facebook and Town Announce.

The goal of these announcements is to keep the public informed of crime issues and any significant events in the community.

Community Requests for Presentations

The Riverdale Park Police Department receives a number of requests for presentations to community groups on hot topic issues, and other crime prevention initiatives throughout the year. All of these requests are honored by the RPPD.