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OAKLAND

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# AGENDA REPORT

**TO:** FRED BLACKWELL  
City Administrator

**FROM:** Chantal R. Cotton  
Asst. to the City Administrator

**SUBJECT:** Informational Report and Presentation  
By Resource Development Associates  
(RDA) of the Measure Y Fiscal Year  
2012-2013 Community Policing  
Neighborhood Services Evaluation Annual Report

**DATE:** May 20, 2014

City Administrator  
Approval

Date

5-27-14

**COUNCIL DISTRICT:** City-Wide

## RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Public Safety Committee accept this informational report regarding the presentation by Resource Development Associates (RDA) of the Measure Y Fiscal Year (FY) 2012-2013 Community Policing Neighborhood Services Evaluation Annual Report. The Measure Y Oversight Committee received this report on January 27, 2014. The presentation at the Public Safety Committee will come from staff at RDA.

For questions regarding this report, you may contact Chantal R. Cotton in the Office of the City Administrator at (510) 238-7587.

Respectfully submitted,

Chantal R. Cotton,  
Assistant to the City Administrator

## ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A: Community Policing Neighborhood Services Evaluation Report FY 2012-2013

Item: \_\_\_\_\_  
Public Safety Committee  
June 10, 2014

# What Works in Community Policing?

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**A Best Practices Context for Measure Y Efforts**

**Prepared by:**

**Resource Development Associates**



**THE CHIEF JUSTICE EARL WARREN INSTITUTE  
ON LAW AND SOCIAL POLICY**  

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**UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA BERKELEY, SCHOOL OF LAW**



**BRIGHT  
RESEARCH GROUP**

## **What Works in Community Policing?**

*A Best Practices Context for Measure Y Efforts*

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### **The Chief Justice Earl Warren Institute on Law and Social Policy University of California, Berkeley School of Law**

The Chief Justice Earl Warren Institute on Law & Social Policy at the UC Berkeley School of Law is a research and policy center with the mission of bridging the gap between academia and practice. As part of Berkeley Law, the Warren Institute leverages the intellectual capital of a world-class public university to produce high-quality data, action-oriented research, and evidence-based policy recommendations on many of society's most challenging issues.

### **Resource Development Associates**

Resource Development Associates is a mission driven consulting firm founded in 1984 to promote the welfare of our communities by contributing to the effective functioning of public and non-profit health and human service systems. To this end, we provide a suite of consulting services to community-based non-profits and local, state and federal agencies. Please take the time to visit our web pages to learn more about us and the important services that we offer. [www.resourcedevelopment.net](http://www.resourcedevelopment.net)

### **Bright Research Group**

Bright Research Group helps public, private and non-profit agencies measure the difference they are making, maximize their ability to offer quality services, align their work to best practices and develop long-term strategies to transform systems and communities.

Authored by Sarah Lawrence and Bobby McCarthy of the Warren Institute

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## What Works in Community Policing?

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## Introduction

In November 2004 Oakland voters passed the Violence Prevention and Public Safety Act, commonly referred to as Measure Y.<sup>1</sup> The stated, overarching goal of Measure Y is to improve public safety, with a particular focus on reducing violence involving Oakland youth. Revenues from the 10-year parcel tax support three components: violence prevention programs, community policing officers, and fire and paramedic services. In addition, up to 3% of funding is set aside for an independent evaluation. This report, which is part of that evaluation effort, looks at “community policing” from a national perspective in terms of the generally agreed upon goals, principles, components, and strategies in the field of policing. It summarizes what we know about community policing from a few decades of learning, research, and implementation efforts. It then examines the community policing components of Measure Y and the extent to which they are aligned with these best practices. In short, how do the community policing elements, as articulated in the 2004 resolution, generally measure up to what we know are the most effective components of community policing?

The 10-year period for Measure Y sunsets in 2014 and City leaders and Oakland voters will need to decide the future of this public safety investment. This report aims to help provide a national context for those discussions and deliberations that is grounded in research and best practices. The goal is to provide various stakeholders a framework for strengthening community policing efforts in Oakland. Intended audiences include the Mayor, City Council members, the Oakland Police Department (OPD), members of the Violence Prevention and Public Safety Oversight Committee, City residents, and community-based organizations, among others.

This assessment is based on a review of the social science research literature, including the seminal articles that are generally considered to be the foundations for what we know about community policing and the latest studies that have built upon that foundation. In addition, it draws from publications by key organizations in the field of policing such as the U.S. Department of Justice, Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Office, U.S. DOJ, Bureau of Justice Assistance, and the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF).

It is worth noting that the City of Oakland is undergoing significant changes and reforms on several fronts, some of which are supported by external monitors and national experts including those related to the Negotiated Settlement Agreement and recommendations being put forward from the Bratton Group and Strategic Policy Partnership. Those efforts are relatively more prescriptive in nature. The purpose of this review is to provide a framework of the “bigger picture” principles and components of community policing in light of the fact that leaders and residents will be revisiting this significant public safety investment in the upcoming year.

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<sup>1</sup> Oakland City Council (2004). Resolution No. 78734 C.M.S., Revised 7-20-04.



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### Overview of Community Policing

For the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, police departments in most jurisdictions in the United States operated under what is generally referred to as a “professional” model of policing. Under this model, local police departments were organized around strict hierarchical lines, utilized standardized operational protocols, and emphasized responding to serious crimes when they occurred. As social disorder and crime rates began to rise during the second half of the century, law enforcement and other municipal leaders began to re-examine the role of police departments in public safety management and craft reform efforts that sought to reduce crime through improved relationships and direct partnerships between citizens and police.

These efforts eventually coalesced around a new philosophy of law enforcement known as “community policing,” which stressed more direct officer involvement with local citizens, was organized around less rigid hierarchies and protocols, and attempted to address the root causes of neighborhood crime with the assistance of the larger community.<sup>2</sup> Adoption of the community policing philosophy by local police departments occurred gradually throughout the 1970’s and 1980’s and by the early 1990’s, more and more cities were beginning to adopt community policing approaches.<sup>3</sup> After decades of adoption at the local level, community policing was effectively endorsed by the federal government with the passage of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994. This bill authorized an initial six-year expenditure of \$8.8 billion in federal aid to support community policing efforts, and created the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) to distribute and monitor this funding. Today, the COPS Office continues to operate community policing initiatives nationwide and distribute grant funds to localities to support those efforts.<sup>4</sup>

Increased funding and recognition of community policing success stories led to an explosion of its implementation in the following years. In 1994, only 20% of surveyed police departments nationally reported employing some elements of the community policing model, a figure which rose to 58% in a subsequent 1997 survey, and 68% by 2003.<sup>5</sup> Community policing remains the dominant local law enforcement philosophy in the United States today, with 81% of the nation’s population being served by law enforcement agencies that have adopted community policing approaches.<sup>6</sup> However, as will be discussed below, while community policing is generally considered the “new norm” in local law

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2 Diamond & Weiss (2009). *Advancing Community Policing Through Community Governance: A Framework Document*. US Department of Justice.

3 Bureau of Justice Assistance (1994). *Understanding Community Policing: A Framework for Action*. US Department of Justice.

4 Community Oriented Policing Services (2013). *COPS History: 1994 to the Present*. U.S. Department of Justice.

5 Connell et. al. (2008). “Can a Community Policing Initiative Reduce Serious Crime? A Local Evaluation.” *Police Quarterly* Vol. 11.

6 Community Oriented Policing Services (2012). *COPS FY 2013 Performance Budget*.



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enforcement, departments' structures and practices still vary considerably across jurisdictions and community policing still means different things to different people.

## What are the Key Components of Community Policing?

In general terms, community policing is not a program; it is not a set of activities; it is not a personnel designation. Rather, community policing is a law enforcement *philosophy*, a way of thinking about improving public safety. While there is a lack of standardization regarding specific terminology and strategies of community policing across cities, community policing efforts can generally be grouped into three broad categories: organizational transformation, community partnership, and problem solving. Each of these components is described in some detail below. By definition, a comprehensive community policing model permeates almost every aspect of a department and the elements described below are best applied to a police department as a whole.

### Key Components of Community Policing

- ✓ Organizational Transformation
- ✓ Community Partnership
- ✓ Problem Solving

## Organizational Transformation

The first component of successful community policing initiatives involves transformational changes in the organizational structure and operation of a police department. This transformation can involve management policies, organizational structure, personnel practices, and information technology systems, among other aspects of how a department is structured and operates.<sup>7</sup>

Arguably, the cornerstone of organizational transformation is that police departments are organized around geographically-based assignments and allocations. One of the main arguments behind this approach is that geographically-based assignments facilitate closer and more frequent contact between the officers who are dedicated to those areas and the people who live and work in them. The thinking is that with increased contact comes increased understanding of the priorities and concerns of a

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<sup>7</sup> Diamond and Weiss (2009).

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neighborhood and better knowledge around local resources and assets that could be leveraged to address those concerns.

Another hallmark of community policing, that is related to but distinct from geographically-based assignments, is decentralization. In this context, the decentralization of a police department means a reduction in a reliance on top-down policy directives from department leadership, devolution in decision-making, and a reporting structure that is less hierarchical. Decentralization gives local officers and precinct leaders more authority and discretion and it enables them to find creative solutions to specific, individual neighborhood problems without the restrictions of blanket, overly-rigid policies. As part of their community policing efforts cities across the country have instituted regional district models, with precinct leaders of different ranks exercising discretion and authority on the best ways to address their unique crime issues.<sup>8,9</sup> Police officers are given increased autonomy to craft creative strategies to address the specific concerns of local residents.

To be effective, organizational transformation must occur at all levels of a police department and permeate a variety of systems and practices. For example, performance evaluation systems may be designed to evaluate officers based on their community policing efforts; the recruitment and hiring of new officers can favor individuals who have a “service orientation” to policing; and training that emphasizes community policing can become part of standard, in-service training.

In this era of limited budgets in which police departments are expected to do more with less, jurisdictions across the country are increasingly using civilian employees as a source for human resources, as they are generally relatively inexpensive compared to sworn officers. Indeed, civilians comprise as much as 30% to 50% of the staff of many departments.<sup>10</sup> In this process, commonly referred to as “civilianization,” non-sworn personnel are used to handle support roles such as administration, dispatch, crime scene forensics, record keeping, and other administrative duties.<sup>11</sup> The infusion of civilian workers to handle these tasks has enabled many departments to free up sworn personnel to focus on direct law enforcement duties and community policing efforts. Indeed federal legislation, such as the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act and community policing grants through the COPS’ program Making Officer Redeployment Effective, has specifically required agencies to hire and use civilian employees so that officers can be re-deployed to community policing efforts.<sup>12</sup> Although cost-savings are the most common motivation, a 2008 national review of civilianization in U.S. police departments found that

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Maguire and Wells (2009). *Implementing Community Policing: Lessons From 12 Agencies*. Community-Oriented Policing Services, US Department of Justice.

<sup>10</sup> Maguire and Wells (2009).

<sup>11</sup> Forst, B. (2000). *The Privatization and Civilianization of Policing: Boundary Changes in Criminal Justice Organizations*.

<sup>12</sup> Kostelac, Constance Anne (2008). *The Changing Face of Police Organizations: Trends in Civilianization*.





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among 76 surveyed agencies, 59% cited “support of community policing efforts” as a motivation to hire more civilian workers.<sup>13</sup>

#### **Example from the Field: Staffing Constraints**

To deal with sworn-personnel shortfalls, some cities have expanded the civilianization of police services to include limited officer-level functions. San Francisco, faced with a slew of retiring officers for whom there was little funding to replace, began a program to train 16 “civilian investigators”. These paid, non-sworn employees are trained to respond to service calls dealing with certain non-violent crimes. They are tasked with performing basic work such as taking victim information, collecting evidence, and creating a report which is then referred to officers at the stations for further investigation.<sup>14</sup>

## Community Partnership

Community partnerships are absolutely critical in order for community policing efforts to be effective. The mantra of community involvement permeates almost every aspect of a department. In police departments that have demonstrated a strong commitment to the philosophy of community policing, police officers and community partners jointly prioritize and tackle public safety issues that are most important to the community. Successful partnerships are more than just frequent contact or simply sharing information. They involve on-going efforts to work together in meaningful ways to address problems facing a neighborhood. The commitment and buy-in to community partnerships happens at all levels, from command staff to supervisors to line officers.

In addition to individual residents, the term “community partners” encompasses a range of groups such as neighborhood associations, faith-based organizations, tenant councils, business groups, local government agencies, social service providers, schools (including elementary and secondary public and private schools, community colleges, vocational schools, and universities), and local businesses. These entities typically enjoy a number of qualities that facilitate effective partnerships, including well-developed organizational structures, physical meeting spaces, social, political, and commercial networks, material and human resources, experienced leaders, and existing community participation. This makes them natural vehicles through which the police can engage with local constituents to address neighborhood concerns.

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Police Executive Research Forum (2010). *Is the Economic Downturn Fundamentally Changing How We Police?*



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Improving the accessibility of police and community services can also be an effective catalyst for community engagement and a way to facilitate community partnership. One example of improved accessibility is increasing the number of locations in which police services are provided or co-locating them with other civic services. Successful cities have also utilized information technology to improve citizen communication and make public safety information more timely and accessible. In a 2009 COPS survey of 12 agencies implementing community policing, nearly all of the evaluated agencies had department websites that provided information about crime alerts and included email addresses of individual officers so that citizens could provide tips, give feedback, and communicate concerns.<sup>15</sup>

#### **Example from the Field: Police Accessibility**

In the City of Naperville, IL, police had been dealing with an emerging gang and burglary problem that was centered around a set of high density, multi-family housing complexes. The Naperville Police Department in 2002 opened a neighborhood service center in the area with extended evening hours and a mix of sworn and civilian personnel. The center provided a number of basic civic and public safety services such as obtaining crime prevention information, filing police reports, paying utility bills, and obtaining parking permits. The center proved extremely popular, with hundreds of local residents utilizing a variety of services within the first three months of its opening.<sup>16</sup>

In order for community partnerships to be effective, some degree of trust and mutual respect between the police and the community is necessary, and in cities across the country that trust and respect are often lacking. Many cities have experienced long histories of high crime, racial profiling, and police misconduct, factors that contribute to low levels of citizen trust in law enforcement. Rebuilding this trust is a critical pre-cursor to the establishment of effective and authentic partnerships between communities and police.

### **Problem Solving**

Perhaps the most transformative aspect of the community policing movement has been the shift from the reactive crime-response model to a more proactive problem-solving or “problem-oriented policing” (POP) model.<sup>17</sup> This approach puts a heavy focus on efforts to prevent crime before it happens by systematically identifying and addressing specific social issues associated with criminal activity. Problem-

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<sup>15</sup> Maguire and Wells (2009).

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Goldstein, H. (1987). “Toward Community-Oriented Policing: Potential, Basic Requirements, and Threshold Questions.” *Crime and Delinquency* Vol. 33 No. 6.



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oriented policing tends to encourage creative problem solving among officers, analysts, and community members to identify the root causes of a problem and then figure out how best to address them. A 2010 review of the research literature found that as a whole, problem-oriented policing approaches had a statistically significant impact on improving public safety.<sup>18</sup>

#### **Example from the Field: Community Partnership and Problem Solving**

Joint task forces made up of the police and one or more existing community groups were established to solve specific community problems. In the mid 1990's, the Anaheim Police Department successfully reduced blight and disorder in the Leatrice/Wakefield neighborhood by working with landlords, tenants, and the Office of Neighborhood Services to create a Neighborhood Advisory Committee tasked with removing problem tenants and reducing unit overcrowding. In the following years, the neighborhood saw marked improvements in building safety, vacancy rates, and reductions in incident reports.<sup>19</sup>

Police departments that are grounded in a community policing philosophy train and assign officers to duties that are focused on creative and active problem solving and prevention, rather than simply reacting to crime and disorder. In order for officers to do this effectively, some degree of autonomy is required, which is also an important aspect of organizational transformation described above. One of the most common approaches to problem solving in police departments is the SARA Problem-Solving Model. SARA stands for the four-step process: Scanning, Analysis, Response, and Assessment. Evidence indicates that problem-oriented policing strategies based on the SARA method can achieve significant reductions in crime over traditional response models. A 2010 summary of the ten most rigorous studies on the effectiveness of SARA-based problem-oriented policing between 1993 and 2006 concluded that these efforts achieved statistically-significant reductions in crime and disorder in their affected cities.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Weisburd et al. (2010). "Is Problem-Oriented Policing Effective in Reducing Crime and Disorder? Findings From a Campbell Systematic Review." *Criminology & Public Policy* Vol. 9 Issue 1. The American Society of Criminology.

<sup>19</sup> City Policy Associates (2000). *Safer Neighborhoods Through Community Policing, Volume II: Three Case Studies*. US Conference of Mayors.

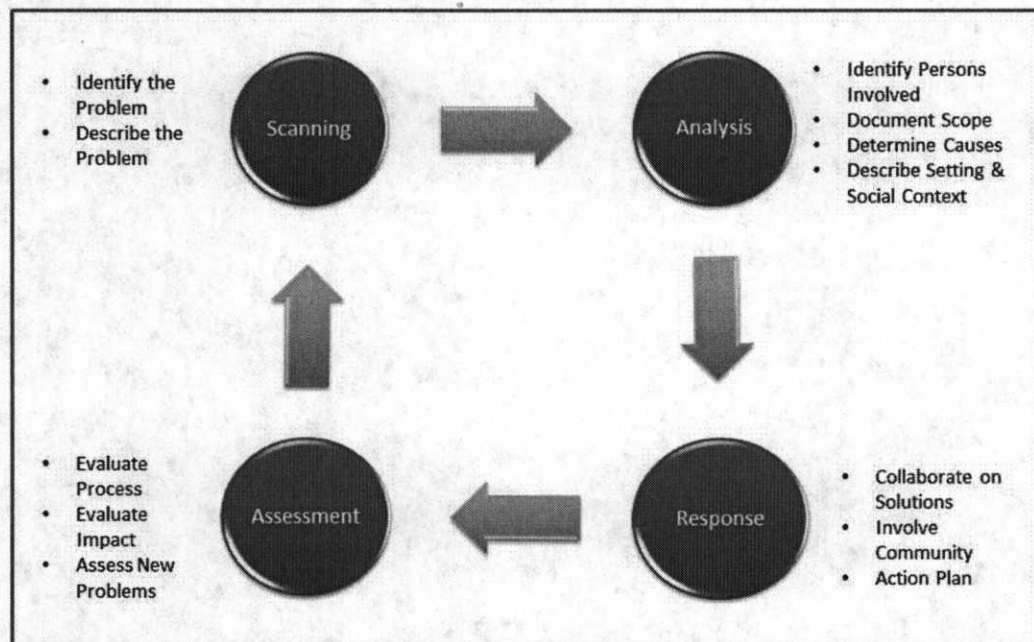
<sup>20</sup> Ibid.



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#### The SARA Model



The specifics of the implementation of the SARA method vary by jurisdiction and situation, but typically individual beat officers or pairs of officers, in partnership with the community, are given the authority and responsibility to identify the crime and disorder issues that are most prominent in their beats, prioritize them, and develop solutions.<sup>21</sup> Some POP efforts can be as simple as an individual officer asking a store owner to improve the lighting of their storefront, while others can be more complex, longer-term issues such as zoning changes to improve a blighted neighborhood.<sup>22</sup>

Some of the more effective POP approaches have occurred in police departments in which a formal set of clearly-articulated, standardized procedures are in place. A shared understanding and clear guidance about the necessary steps of a POP approach increase the likelihood that each of the critical steps in the process is taken in crafting and implementing effective responses to identified problems.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Diamond and Weiss (2009).

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#### Example from the Field: SARA Application

A program conducted by the Jacksonville Sherriff's Office in 2010 assigned problem-oriented policing officers working under a SARA-style problem-solving framework to 22 of the city's most violent criminal "hot spots" and compared crime rates with those of the other 61 hot spots not subject to the program. Examples of POP actions included repairing damaged fences, installing street lighting, meeting with business owners to improve security measures, and graffiti removal. Problem-oriented policing was associated with a 33% drop in the rate of street violence compared to traditional policing.<sup>23</sup>

Effective POP approaches are grounded in high-quality information and, therefore, high-quality information technology systems are essential. One of the better-known POP approaches is the CompStat process, which was developed in New York City in the mid 1990's and has since been adopted by many other major cities throughout the United States. Under CompStat, police department personnel are held accountable for crime levels in their geographic areas and required to regularly present on the current conditions within their areas, as well as the strategies underway or in development to address those conditions. CompStat has been cited as a useful tool in enhancing community policing efforts by assisting officers in really understanding the nature of crime within their areas, enabling them to shape appropriate responses.<sup>24</sup>

#### Example from the Field: SARA Method and Training

New officers in the Colorado Springs Police Department are required to undergo a formal, SARA-based training program developed by the Police Executive Research Forum that includes completing a portfolio evaluation of their beat neighborhood prior to beginning active duty. The Reno, NV Police Department devotes specific courses in its academy to the instruction of the SARA model and its application to problem-oriented policing.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Taylor, Koper, and Woods (2011). "A Randomized Control Trial of Different Policing Strategies at Hot Spots of Violent Crime." *Journal of Experimental Criminology*, Vol 7, Issue 2.

<sup>24</sup> Maguire and Wells (2009).

<sup>25</sup> Diamond and Weiss (2009).

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## Keys to Successful Community Policing

As OPD continues to implement significant reform efforts and as the City revisits the renewal of Measure Y, it would be helpful to keep in mind what decades of experience from numerous police departments across the country has taught us about successful community policing. The following issues have been found to assist police departments engage in effective community policing efforts:

- ✓ Form community partnerships with a wide-range of partners, above and beyond active resident groups
- ✓ Increase the department's accessibility to the residents it serves
- ✓ Train personnel at every level of the department in best practices in community policing
- ✓ Work towards increasing officer buy-in about the benefits of the community policing philosophy
- ✓ Prioritize sustained and meaningful commitment by the department's leadership to the community policing philosophy
- ✓ Integrate community policing activities into performance evaluation systems
- ✓ Continue to support systematic and standardized problem solving approaches

## Common Challenges and Barriers to Success

Common challenges and barriers to the successful adoption of community policing can be summed up by the following: It is hard work! The institutionalization of community policing through organizational transformation necessitates sufficient resources and sustained commitment from department executive staff and city leaders. Changing the culture of a department can be as difficult, if not more difficult, than changing policies, procedures, and training. Establishing and maintaining meaningful community partnerships require an education of all stakeholders, the inclusion of missing voices, and a shared responsibility for the outcomes. Engaging in effective problem solving requires input from several information sources, high-quality and reliable data, officer autonomy to craft and implement targeted and creative solutions, and on-going communication. None of this is easy.

## Community Policing and Measure Y

The purpose of this report is provide what is known about the best practices in community policing as context as the City of Oakland reassesses this investment in public safety strategies. The challenge here is to apply community policing principles that are typically viewed from a department-wide perspective to an individual resolution that directly impacts only a fraction of OPD's police officers and policies. That said, it is possible to examine the extent to which the community policing elements of Measure Y support a community policing philosophy. This assessment is based on a review of the 2004 Measure Y resolution language, previous reports published as part of the Measure Y evaluation effort, previous assessments by expert consultants, meeting minutes from Violence Prevention and Public Safety Oversight Committee



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meetings, and selected media coverage.<sup>26</sup> Some aspects of Measure Y's community policing elements are well-aligned with the principles and best practices outlined above. However, other aspects of Measure Y's community policing elements could be better aligned to best practices.

The core of Measure Y's community policing effort is the provision of funding "to hire and maintain at least a total of 63 police officers" assigned to various community policing objectives. The resolution establishes Neighborhood Beat Officers in which "each community policing beat shall have at least one neighborhood officer assigned solely to serve the residents of that beat to provide consistent contact and familiarity with the residents and officers, continuity in problem solving, and basic availability of police response in each neighborhood." These officers work closely with Neighborhood Crime Prevention Councils (NCPCs), responding to the concerns of neighborhood residents in their beats by attending local meetings and working on issues that are identified as priorities by each NCPC. Oakland residents are currently served by 57 NCPCs that historically have corresponded geographically to OPD police beats. At least six of the 63 officers are designated as Crime Reduction Team (CRT) officers who are tasked to "investigate and respond to illegal narcotic transactions and commission of violent crimes in identified violence hot spots."<sup>27</sup> Additional community policing objectives as articulated in the resolution include school safety, domestic violence and child abuse intervention, and officer training and equipment.

### **In Alignment with Best Practices**

The establishment of Neighborhood Beat Officers, more commonly referred to as Problem Solving Officers (PSOs), is clearly in line with two of the key tenets of effective community policing: community partnerships and solving problems. In addition, the assignment of officers to specific beats is also in line with a key component of community policing: geographically-based police officer assignments.

As discussed above, SARA is one of the more effective and commonly-used problem solving models. PSOs are expected to use the SARA method of problem solving and a web-based SARA database, which was designed for OPD by Research Development Associates and launched in 2008 to track their performance in executing SARA-based problem solving.<sup>28</sup> Research has shown that systematic approaches with clearly articulated and consistently employed steps to SARA produce better results. According to one COPS Office evaluation, "departments that create[d] a more formal mechanism for recording problem solving endeavors" was a demonstration of greater commitment to problem solving approach.<sup>29</sup> OPD's SARA database embodies these best practices.

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<sup>26</sup> Primary source documents are included in the References section.

<sup>27</sup> Oakland City Council (2004).

<sup>28</sup> Resource Development Associates (2012). *City of Oakland: Community Policing Neighborhood Services Evaluation FY 2011-2012*.

<sup>29</sup> Maguire and Wells (2009).



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## Not in Alignment with Best Practices

While resolution language can be a good starting point, the actual implementation of community policing efforts and the quality of those efforts are what matters most. The development of the SARA database does not necessarily mean that all officers are engaging in the SARA method in a manner that is consistent and effective and questions about the use of the system have been raised.<sup>30</sup> In addition, the SARA database is only one example of problem solving approaches and other elements of Measure Y could be infused with a problem solving focus above and beyond the use of the database. Similarly, the requirement that PSOs work with NCPCs and attend council meetings does not necessarily mean that quality community policing partnerships are in place. To be sure, there are beats where strong and effective community partnerships exist, but these types of partnerships should exist in all beats.<sup>31</sup> A previous assessment of OPD found that “in strictly allotting new police to specified community policing roles the well intentioned Measure Y fundamentally undercuts how successful community policing should work.”<sup>32</sup> Said another way, the resolution language in some ways hinders the implementation of community policing that is fully aligned with best practices.

Assessing how Measure Y measures up to another key component of community policing, organizational transformation, is by definition not appropriate. Organizational transformation means that the community policing philosophy permeates every aspect of a police department such as culture, systems, training, and policies. The extent to which OPD employs those elements is an exercise beyond the scope of the evaluation efforts of the Measure Y resolution.

## Oakland Police Department: A Department in Flux

It is important to acknowledge the greater context in which OPD is operating above and beyond Measure Y. The Department is currently in a state of flux with several reform efforts underway, oversight from external monitors in place, and recommendations from national experts being reviewed. These include efforts related to the Negotiated Settlement Agreement<sup>33</sup> and assessments by the Bratton Group<sup>34</sup> and Strategic Policy Partnership, LLC.<sup>35</sup> These assessments are examining the issues of geographically-based assignments and decentralization, among others, and providing concrete recommendations that will move the Department closer to a department that is grounded in the community policing philosophy. In addition, OPD is at present implementing a Neighborhood Policing Plan that will change geographic assignments and reporting structures.

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<sup>30</sup> Resource Development Associates (2012).

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Harnett Associates (2006). *Crime Fighting in Oakland: An Assessment of the Oakland Police Department*.

<sup>33</sup> Matier and Ross (2013). “Oakland Pays Big For Police Compliance”. *The San Francisco Chronicle*. May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2013.

<sup>34</sup> Bratton Group (2013). *Oakland Crime Reduction Project: Bratton Group Findings and Recommendations and District Based Investigations in Oakland*.

<sup>35</sup> Report forthcoming.



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Another challenge the Department faces, which impacts the implementation of Measure Y, is sufficient staffing. OPD has experienced significant cuts in the number of sworn officers in recent years and the City currently has an active force of 638 sworn officers serving a population of nearly 400,000, or 1.6 officers per 1,000 residents. This level of sworn police officers per capita is well below the national average of 2.4, and significantly lower than that of similarly-sized cities that also struggle with high crime rates, such as Cleveland, OH (3.7 officers per 1,000 residents) and St. Louis, MO (4.3 officers per 1,000 residents).<sup>36</sup> In some ways, these on-going staffing challenges could limit the Department's ability to fully embrace a community policing philosophy.

## Measure Y as an Opportunity

The purpose of this report is to provide a national, best practices context of community policing for Oakland stakeholders in light of the Measure Y resolution being revisited in the upcoming year. As outlined above, some elements of Measure Y as articulated in the 2004 resolution are well-aligned with what we know makes for effective community policing, while other elements are not. In addition, the realities of implementation challenges of some aspects of Measure Y, which could be viewed as understandable given the greater context of the Department, limit the positive impact of Measure Y.

A significant body of evidence from decades of experiences in police departments indicates that the adoption of community policing as a department-wide philosophy that permeates almost every aspect of a department can achieve measurable reductions in crime and disorder and can lead to improvements in residents' quality of life. However, this is very difficult to achieve and requires significant time and support. In order for community policing to be truly successful it needs to become a reality in practice, not just endorsed in principal. Moving forward, Measure Y should be viewed as an opportunity. An opportunity to continue to employ some of the existing elements of the resolution that are in line with best practices of community policing; an opportunity to work harder to ensure that other elements of the resolution match the reality of things happening "on the ground;" and an opportunity to further infuse best practices into this significant and well-intentioned investment in public safety in the City of Oakland.

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<sup>36</sup> FBI (2011). Uniform Crime Reports: Full Time Law Enforcement Employees by State, by City.

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