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Community Policing in the New Economy

by Ellen Scrivner and Darrel W. Stephens



COPS
Community Oriented Policing Services
U.S. Department of Justice



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Letter from the Director of the COPS Office

Dear colleagues,

As the recent tragic events in Baltimore, Ferguson, New York, and other locations have demonstrated, our nation needs community policing now more than ever before. Yet funding for the required staff, training, and technology remains low—a lingering effect of the financial crisis of 2008, which decimated budgets for personnel, infrastructure, and a wide range of law enforcement activities.

For these reasons, I recommend that all agency leaders read this eye-opening report. Written by the Major Cities Chiefs Association (MCCA), it documents the results of a COPS Office-funded study MCCA conducted to examine both the effects of funding reductions on community policing activities and the role of agency leadership in providing community policing services within tight budget constraints.

As a former police chief, I am familiar with the difficult balancing act that agency leadership must perform to prioritize and deliver services despite reductions in staff and funds. So I found the innovations and procedural adjustments described in this report very impressive.

Agencies not only streamlined operations but also took bold steps—such as using social media sites, camera-operated virtual patrols, and citizen volunteers—to compensate for personnel losses while maintaining public safety and good community relations.

What's more, the community policing activities they adopted—including practices such as partnering with community leaders to prioritize services and decide which could be cut back—helped them improve operational efficiency and strengthen community bonds.

MCCA did an excellent job of producing this document, which includes many suggestions for easily implementable changes and community policing procedures that can not only stretch your budget but also increase law enforcement effectiveness. Some can also enhance officer safety and morale.

I hope you will read it with an eye toward incorporating some of its recommendations in your agency. We must not be defeated by financial challenges in our efforts to serve and protect our communities. There is an old expression, “where there’s a will, there’s a way.” This report provides the way—we rely upon law enforcement leaders to provide the will.

Sincerely,



Ronald L. Davis, Director
Office of Community Oriented Policing Services

Letter from the Executive Director of the MCCA

Dear colleagues,

The economic downturn of 2008 had an enormous impact on police agencies across the United States of America. They lost both sworn and civilian personnel, and other activities were severely restricted. Although the economy has improved, many departments have not returned to their staffing levels before the downturn. We wanted to understand the impact of these losses on community policing.

With the support of the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office) and the tireless efforts of Dr. Ellen Scrivner, we were able to survey police executives regarding budget constraints and their effects on community policing. The information gathered was used in a round table discussion of police executives on how agencies sustained their community policing initiatives during the economic downturn. These insights proved invaluable in preparing this paper.

Many Major Cities Chiefs Association (MCCA) agencies lost both sworn and civilian personnel through attrition and layoffs. We learned that most police executives continued their commitment to community policing. They took advantage of the rapid growth of social media to sustain and enhance community engagement. Technology helped improve the productivity of police officers, and they often took on responsibilities that had previously been handled by specialists. By exercising strong leadership, police executives were able to meet the challenges of policing in the new economic reality.

In addition to policing in an environment of reduced resources, the police are also facing a crisis in confidence because of incidents involving questionable use of force. Community policing is the most effective way the police can regain the trust and confidence of the public. We hope this paper will make a contribution to that end.

Sincerely,



Darrel W. Stephens, Executive Director
Major Cities Chiefs Association

Executive Summary

The current questioning of police policies and performance along with calls for police reform was preceded by the fiscal crisis of 2008 that hit state and local governments especially hard (Gordon 2012). Sharp declines in tax revenues reduced operating and capital budgets that translated into cuts in services. Because law enforcement typically makes up the largest percentage of a municipal general fund budget, police agencies were not immune to budget reductions. Most were forced to make cuts; some of those cuts were severe.

Since personnel account for the majority of a police department's expenses, it follows that sizeable budget reductions led some departments to eliminate staff, both sworn and civilian. Cuts were also made in other areas, including training, technology, and equipment. This study explores what impact those losses had on how the agencies policed their communities, specifically focusing on the extent to which community policing activities were affected. It also examines the role of agency leadership in guiding departments through the new economic landscape and includes advice gleaned from discussions with police executives.

While this advice was not directed at preventing events such as the violent protests that took place in communities across the country in response to police behavior, it certainly could be framed within that context because of the focus on the need for community collaboration and problem solving that solidify police legitimacy—something that is very much needed at this point in time.

For many, community problem oriented policing has become an ingrained part of contemporary law enforcement. While the recession forced agencies to alter some of their activities, commitment to the philosophy and practice remains strong both inside and outside the departments. The new economic reality demands innovative service delivery methods to aid police in meeting their obligations to the communities they serve despite fewer resources and in addition to current calls for police reform. Clearly, community policing stands to play a major role in those reforms.

Introduction

Prior to the outbreaks of violence following the activities in Ferguson, Missouri, the 2008 financial crisis captured the attention of everyone in law enforcement. It left in its wake a new reality for almost every sector of the economy, including the police. Faced with fewer personnel and less in the way of financial and technological resources, agencies were forced to adjust how they delivered police services. One common theme pervading much of the recent literature is that the Great Recession changed the way police agencies operate. Increased efficiency, streamlined decision making, and innovative organizational management are hallmarks of postrecession law enforcement (PERF 2013; Parlow 2011; COPS Office 2011; Cordero 2011).

These changes did not come without pain. Between 2008 and 2013, 72 percent of the Major Cities Chiefs Association (MCCA) agencies lost sworn and civilian personnel through layoffs and attrition. More than half of smaller departments saw substantial funding cuts in successive years (PERF 2010; PERF 2013). Furloughs accounted for additional work-time staffing losses. Between 2010 and 2013, MCCA agencies furloughed employees every year, ranging from 28 percent in 2010 to 7.7 percent in 2013 (MCCA 2013). Departments made other cuts in everything from training to equipment to cope with dwindling financial resources.

Community policing, which emphasizes problem solving and collaboration with community members, key stakeholders, and municipal services to prevent, respond to, and reduce crime,¹ has become an integral operational practice for many law enforcement agencies. It can require substantial personnel, funding, and technological resources. MCCA received a grant in October 2013 from the Office of Community Oriented Police Services (COPS Office) to explore whether and to what extent funding reductions affected an agency's community policing activities.

This study also explored the role leadership played in providing police services to the community during this time frame. In addition to a review of the literature, research included a survey of MCCA agencies and a round table discussion with a group of chiefs and academic partners held in Charlotte, North Carolina, on June 17–18, 2014 to explore these questions in depth. This paper reports the results of these efforts, which took place before the nation cast a spotlight on policing. Yet the findings are relevant not only in struggling to manage the impact of funding reductions but also in responding to the calls for police reform.

1. The Office of Community Oriented Policing Services defines community policing as 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 (COPS Office 2014).

Origins of Community Policing

Community policing has roots in the community relations units of the 1960s and the foot patrol research of the 1970s. It emerged as a broad strategy in the 1980s, along with problem-oriented policing, when departments were struggling to develop partnerships with communities in response to dramatic increases in crime and violence.

The Crime Control Act of 1994 provided unprecedented federal funding to employ officers at the local level to implement community policing and problem solving, which soon became the dominant approaches to policing. By 1999, 64 percent of the police departments in the United States, serving 86 percent of the residents, indicated that they engaged in community policing activities. There were 91,072 full-time community policing officers, and 87 percent of local officers were employed by agencies that provided community policing training for recruits (Hickman and Reaves 2001).

Community policing continued to evolve and change over the years. Competing ideas such as CompStat; hot spots; and intelligence-led, evidence-based, and predictive policing have been attractive to chiefs as they have sought to create new programs that might be more effective at reducing crime and violence. By 2007, federal funding had declined significantly and affected the number of full-time officers dedicated to community policing. Full-time community policing officers dropped to 47,000, and a majority of the local departments serving populations greater than 50,000 had special units dedicated to community policing (Reaves 2010).

The Impact of the Great Recession on Policing

The Great Recession of 2008,² spawned by the bursting U.S. housing bubble, resulted in increased unemployment, decreased housing prices, and reduced consumer spending, which in turn hampered the Federal Government's ability to generate tax revenue. The effects of decreased federal, state, and municipal tax revenue—the lifeblood for most agency funding—were felt in budgets at nearly every level of government. According to Oliff, Mai, and Palacios (2012), the Great Recession caused the largest drop in state revenues ever recorded. As local and state governments clamored to decrease spending in order to make up budget gaps, many law enforcement agencies saw reduced funding, which led, in some cases, to layoffs, forced retirements, furloughs, hiring freezes, and overtime reductions, among a host of other personnel and infrastructure cuts. This section reviews the available literature to better understand how the Great Recession impacted law enforcement agencies and, more specifically, how agencies were able to navigate the rough waters of fiscal uncertainty while maintaining a commitment to community oriented policing.

Survey research

There is a substantial body of research detailing the Great Recession's impact on North American law enforcement agencies. Surveys conducted throughout the recession provide the best aggregation of primary source data and simultaneously allow for tracking data throughout the various stages of collapse and recovery. However, few sources specifically focus on the impacts to agencies' community policing efforts.

In 2009, the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) published results from a July 2008 survey in which nearly 40 percent of respondents indicated their agencies had already begun to see decreased operating budgets. Forty-five percent of respondents to the same survey said the economic downturn impacted their agency's ability to reduce crime. It is important to note that at the time of the 2008 PERF survey, the financial collapse was in its early stages—especially when considering the fact that local budgets generally lag behind the overall economy (COPS Office 2011; Melekian 2011; Schieder, Spence, and Mansourian 2012).

PERF conducted a follow-up survey five months later in December 2008, exactly one year into the financial crisis. Sixty-three percent of responding agencies said they were preparing for budget cuts during the next fiscal year, and those cuts would, on average, represent 6.24 percent of their overall funding. Overtime funding had been cut in 62 percent of departments, and 53 percent implemented hiring freezes. Investments in new technology, training, and recruitment were also being slashed as departments faced reduced funding.

In September 2010, nearly 15 months after the official end of the Great Recession (June 2009), PERF conducted yet another survey. Of the 608 respondents, 51 percent reported budget cuts from FY 2009 to FY 2010 with an average budget decrease of 7 percent. Fifty-nine percent of departments that saw reductions in 2010 expected additional budget cuts in FY 2011. Among all respondents, employment of sworn and civilian personnel decreased by 3 percent and 1 percent, respectively.

In many cases, budget cuts and loss of personnel led to cuts in police services: 47 percent of departments said in 2010 that services in their communities declined or would decline as a result of decreased funding.

2. According to the Federal Reserve, the Great Recession began in December 2007 and ended in June 2009 (Federal Reserve History 2015).

The final PERF survey came in 2012—now three years removed from the end of the Great Recession. It gathered responses from 700 law enforcement agencies, including 416 that also completed the 2010 survey. Results from these 416 repeat respondents provided the first glimpses of recovery. Of the 416 carryover respondents, 51 percent reported budget cuts in 2012 compared with 78 percent in 2010. Similarly, the proportion of departments that planned for future cuts decreased from 61 percent in 2010 to 40 percent in 2012. There was no change, however, in the number of departments implementing layoffs: 23 percent of departments reported laying off personnel in both 2010 and 2012.

MCCA survey. A 2014 survey by Major Cities Chiefs Association (MCCA) provides one of the few examples of a survey dedicated solely to understanding how the economic downturn impacted community policing. The survey was distributed only to MCCA members, who represent the largest police agencies in North America and the United Kingdom. Of the 75 North American member agencies, 42 responded to the survey. Overall, two-thirds of respondents to the MCCA survey said they lost personnel as a result of the economic downturn and more than half said the recession impacted their department's community policing initiatives. Encouragingly, 95 percent of respondents also said that their departments remain committed to community policing following the Great Recession. This survey will be discussed in greater detail in the next section.

While the PERF and MCCA surveys provide clear snapshots of the recession's effects on law enforcement agencies at various points in the crisis, the surveys are not without their shortcomings. The PERF surveys do not categorize responses by potentially useful criteria like agency size, geographic region, or whether an agency is state or local. As a result, there is no insight into whether smaller departments fared any better or worse than larger departments or if some localities coped better than others, even though "when an economic crisis takes place, be it national, regional, or global, its effect on the territory tends to be uneven" (Cohen 2011, 7). Similarly, the MCCA survey targeted only the largest law enforcement agencies and excluded smaller municipal and tribal organizations altogether. Future studies could take these variables into account to provide a more detailed and nuanced analysis.

Case studies. Various case studies further detailed how individual departments were impacted by the recession. Camden, New Jersey, for example, saw devastating budget cuts and a loss of half its police force while Flint, Michigan, and Paterson, New Jersey, each saw their forces reduced by a quarter (Parlow 2011). The Greater Manchester (United Kingdom) Police faced losses of 2,700 of its 13,000 employees, and the Corpus Christi (Texas) Police Department coped with annual cuts of 2–5 percent to its \$70 million dollar budget over a period of four years (PERF 2013).

There are widely known issues with case studies. On one hand, they provide in-depth analyses of how the economic downturn affected agencies on an individual basis. On the other hand, it is difficult to generalize or normalize impacts and outcomes on a larger population. Taken together, though, the surveys and case studies clearly illustrate that law enforcement agencies are not recession-proof.

Operational changes

The 2008 financial crisis left in its wake a new economic reality. One common theme pervading much of the recent scholarship is that the Great Recession changed the way law enforcement agencies operate. Increased efficiency, streamlined decision making, and innovative organizational management are the hallmarks of post-recession law enforcement (PERF 2013; Parlow 2011; COPS Office 2011; Cordero 2011). Changes to the police service delivery model were necessary developments in the evolution of policing because the public expects consistent and high-level delivery of police services even in the face of budget cuts and personnel losses (Melekian 2011).

A review of the literature shows that most sources discuss agencies' responses to the economic downturn in general terms. Very few articles specifically address how the economy has impacted departments' community policing activities. Of the articles that do provide some focus on community policing, only a small number provide more than a cursory discussion of how agencies have handled community policing in the new economy.

According to Parlow (2011), most departments continued to prioritize emergency response over other nonemergency services, in no small part because of its presumed impact on public safety. A related finding found that chiefs retained an ongoing commitment to their sworn personnel. A poll of police chiefs in 2008 revealed that chiefs were, for the most part, unwilling to sacrifice sworn personnel to acquire new technology or maintain equipment or training budgets. Chiefs also tended to believe that sworn personnel should be the last cut in times of austerity (PERF 2009). In general, the Great Recession challenged law enforcement agencies to think critically about issues like organizational structure and how to reallocate or redeploy personnel to meet strategic goals by increasing efficiencies while reining in costs.

Redeployment strategies became a part of the playbook for a number of police departments. They chose to alter shift times, reduce or increase patrol levels in certain areas, redefine investigative priorities, and find alternative solutions to handling calls for service (PERF 2013). In order to free up patrol officers to respond to emergency calls, some departments stopped responding to certain types of calls altogether. Noninjury motor vehicle accidents, unverified burglar alarms, theft from auto, noise complaints, and parking complaints are just some examples of the calls for which departments decided to stop responding (Parlow 2011; PERF 2010).

Organizational restructuring was another measure departments undertook to increase efficiency and maintain service levels in lean economic times. Specialty units were reduced or discontinued by 45 percent of departments responding to PERF's 2012 survey, and 25 percent of departments consolidated units. In many instances, personnel previously assigned to specialty units were reassigned to patrol duty. In isolated and extreme cases, law enforcement agencies demoted staff of certain ranks as cost-saving measures. For example, in Camden, New Jersey, 70 percent of the remaining police force was demoted and the rank of captain effectively disappeared.

Other departments looked at ways to consolidate or regionalize services like printing, vehicle maintenance, and laboratory services with other municipal departments and neighboring law enforcement agencies (PERF 2010; COPS Office 2011; Parlow 2011; PERF 2013). In fact, 22 percent of respondents to PERF's 2010 survey reported they had consolidated services with other departments. A 2011 survey from the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) showed that one-quarter of respondents made multijurisdictional arrangements to promote cost-effective service and resource sharing of crime scene technicians, dispatch services, SWAT, hazmat, laboratories, and training (COPS Office 2011). Some departments also sought to reduce overhead by closing district offices, neighborhood store fronts, and leased facilities.

To spare as many sworn personnel as possible, some agencies absorbed large decreases in their technology budgets or abandoned plans to acquire or invest in new technology altogether. Similarly, many training programs (especially recruit training) were either discontinued or moved to computer-based systems as cost-saving measures. Municipalities pursued more support from citizen volunteers to replace previously sworn school crossing guards, aid in search and rescue efforts, and assist sworn officers at DUI checkpoints. Some municipalities even leaned on volunteers for dispatch duties, administrative tasks, and crime analysis (PERF 2013).

There is a decided lack of research that focuses on departments' community policing initiatives in the wake of the recession. A couple of sources do shed light on how community policing is perceived and maintained in light of financial pressures. Some departments, like those in Corpus Christi and San Diego (PERF 2010; PERF 2013), had specialized units dedicated to community policing, disbanded those units, and pushed to have their patrol officers more engaged in community problem-solving activities to compensate. Conversely, the Camden Police Department formed a specialized unit to focus on policing lower-level offenses. Camden Chief Scott Thomson realized that patrol units were so preoccupied with dispatch calls that so-called "quality of life" crimes received less attention. Three quality response teams (QRT), made up of 25 officers and a sergeant, were

formed to proactively target these low-level offenses. According to the PERF report, “Crime trends are examined to identify problem locations, and QRTs are directed to those areas. QRT officers provide a visible police presence on foot, and create opportunities to communicate with residents of troubled communities” (PERF 2013, 16).

The COPS Office views community policing as the best organizational philosophy and one well suited to help departments increase efficiency and effectiveness in tough economic climates. “As police resources shrink, the collaborative problem-solving model that calls upon others to take central roles (and bring real resources to bear) in public safety is more critical than ever” (Schieder, Spence, & Mansourian 2012, 13). The COPS Office contends—and other sources agree—that in times of economic strife, community policing can help departments mitigate the effects of decreasing budgets as community participation multiplies available resources and efficient problem solving strategies allow departments to more effectively preempt, target, and respond to crime (COPS Office 2011).

Analyst Zach Friend and Lieutenant Rick Martinez of the Santa Cruz (California) Police Department (SCPD) agree. They wrote an April 2010 article that serves as a case study for how to maintain community policing in an economic downturn. Friend and Martinez argue that the SCPD’s commitment to community policing actually saved the department from having to lay off any of its 100 sworn employees as it was awarded nearly \$2 million in grants from the COPS Office in 2009. The SCPD’s community policing approach is multifaceted and focuses on prevention, partnerships, and establishing trust among community stakeholders, the media, and government officials alike (Friend & Martinez 2010).

More research is needed to better understand the economy’s impact on departments’ community policing activities and the strategies agencies can use to adjust operations and staffing in light of tight budgets that are expected to persist in the coming years. Future research should help clear up the conceptual muddling of community policing that arises from departments defining and employing the concept in different ways. Some departments view it as the responsibility of a special unit, and others view it as an organizational philosophy. While the relationships between the economy, funding, community policing, and crime are decidedly complex, they are worthy of further investigation because of their public safety implications.

The Great Recession, Major Cities, and Community Policing

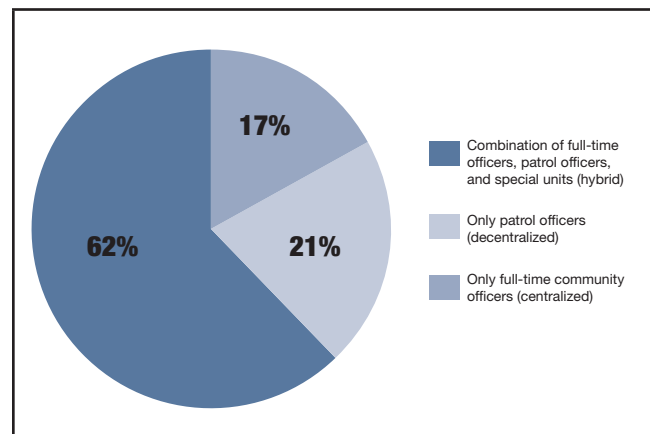
This section focuses on the findings of a Major Cities Chiefs Association's (MCCA) electronic survey of MCCA members. The primary objective of the survey was to better understand how and to what extent the 2008 financial crisis impacted member departments' community policing objectives. Forty-two (42) agencies across the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom responded, representing 56 percent of MCCA's 75 North American members.

Community policing has a well-established history in most of the surveyed organizations. The range of responses was 39 years: some departments initiated community policing efforts as early as 1974 and others as recently as 2013. A majority of respondents (27 out of 42, or 64 percent) reported implementing community policing as a departmental strategy at least a decade before the 2008 economic downturn.³ Both the median and average year in which departments began their community policing programs was 1993.

Results showed that departments allocate personnel to perform community-oriented tasks in one of three distinct ways: centralized, decentralized, or hybrid approaches. For the purposes of this report, a centralized approach is defined as one in which only full-time community officers are dedicated to the task of community policing. A decentralized approach refers to a strategy that considers community policing exclusively a part of patrol officer duties. A hybrid approach is a strategy that uses some combination of dedicated full-time staff, patrol officers, and special units to perform community policing objectives.⁴

Responses showed that 7 departments (17 percent) employ a centralized approach, 9 (21 percent) adhere to a decentralized approach, and 26 (62 percent) reported using a hybrid combination of full-time officers, patrol officers, and specialized units to carry out community policing duties.

Figure 1. Community policing strategies (n=42)



3. This number may be even higher, but 8 out of 42 respondents misinterpreted question 1, provided inexact responses, or were unsure of the date.

4. These definitions are the most useful way to group departments according to responses to survey question 2.

Table 1. Community policing activities

Community policing activity	Selections	% Selected
Problem solving	42	100.0
Officer representation at community meetings	42	100.0
Community engagement	41	97.6
Bicycle patrols	39	92.9
Citizen volunteers	36	85.7
Training—recruit	35	83.3
Foot patrols	34	81.0
Citizen ride-along	32	76.2
Citizen police academy	32	76.2
Training— in-service	31	73.8
Block watch	28	66.7
POP projects assigned/monitored at precinct/division level	26	61.9
Neighborhood store front offices	19	45.2
Citizen neighborhood patrols	19	45.2
Other special units?	16*	38.1

**Note: Actual reported numbers indicated 19 responses to the open-ended “Other Special Units?” selection; however, three of the 19 responses were comments on an issue with the preceding question. These selections were therefore discarded.*

Community policing activities

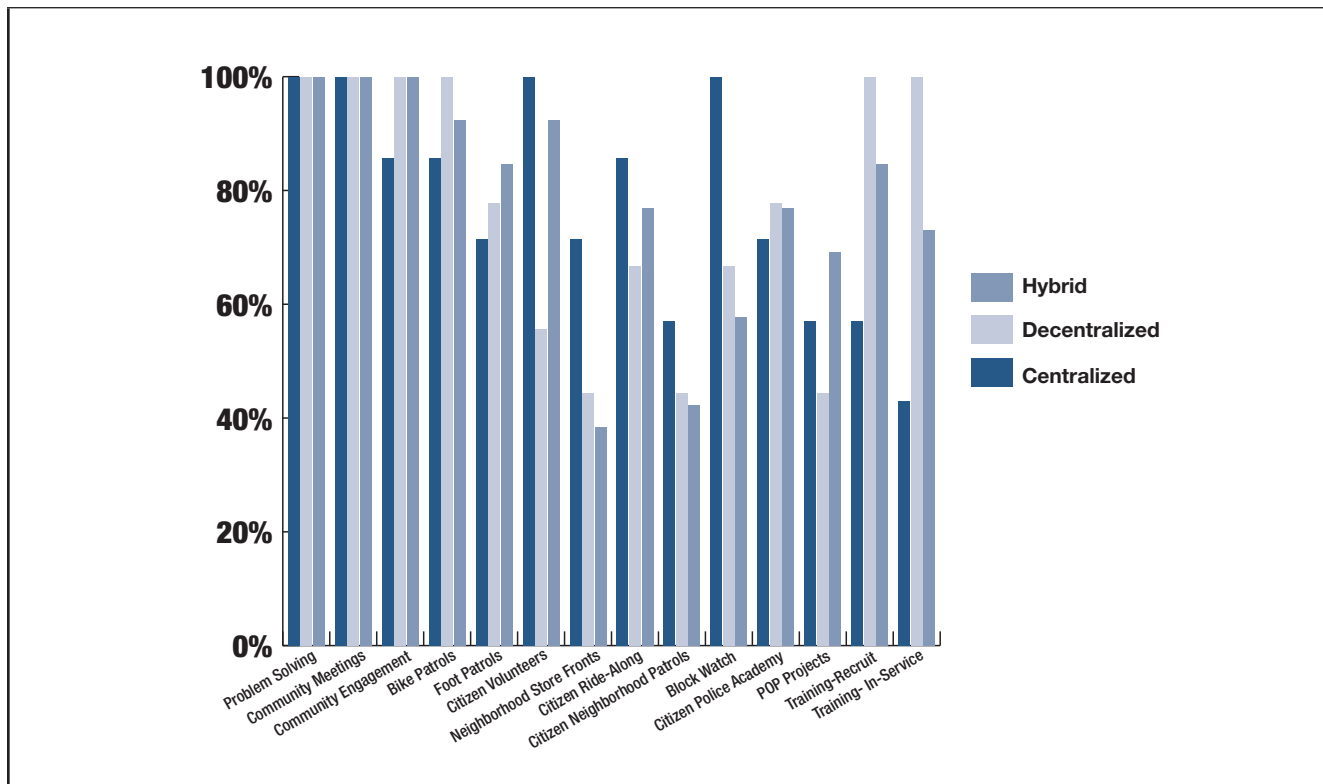
The responding departments engage in varied and diverse community policing activities. While all 42 departments report using problem solving and officer representation at community meetings, a significant proportion also participate in community engagement activities (41 of 42, 97.6 percent) and bicycle patrols (39 of 42, 92.9 percent).

This data is useful in itself, but it becomes even more so when the responses are categorized by each of the previously defined personnel strategies. As it turns out, there are some community policing activities that departments are more or less likely to engage in depending on the way they allocate personnel for community policing tasks.

For example, the data indicates a positive correlation between integration of patrol units in community policing activities and training.

- ▶ Departments belonging to the decentralized category were more than twice as likely to provide in-service training then centralized departments. Decentralized departments also reported training recruits in community policing 75 percent more often than centralized departments.
- ▶ All (100 percent) of departments utilizing the decentralized model reported providing both recruit and in-service training.
- ▶ Centralized departments reported providing in-service training at a rate of 57.1 percent and recruit training at a rate of 42.9 percent.
- ▶ Of hybrid departments, 81.5 percent train recruits in community policing and 70.4 percent provide in-service training.

Figure 2. Activity response rate by personnel strategy



Other findings include the following:

- Decentralized departments were 44 percent less likely to engage citizen volunteers than were their centralized counterparts.
- Compared with just 44.4 percent of decentralized and 38.4 percent of hybrid departments, a full 71.4 percent of centralized departments have neighborhood storefront offices.
- Centralized departments supported block watches 33 percent more than decentralized departments and 42 percent more than hybrid departments.
- “Other special units” departments use include school resource officers, youth outreach and education programs, and mounted patrol units.
- The number of hybrid departments is much larger than that of centralized or decentralized departments. As a result, overall averages tended to be very similar to those of hybrid departments. This effect is visualized in figure 2.

SARA, the most commonly used problem-solving model

All 42 respondents reported incorporating problem solving into their community policing activities. Of the total responses, 33 departments (79 percent) said they use the SARA problem-solving model while 9 departments (21 percent) use another model.⁵ Other problem solving models used include SMART;⁶ the 5-step model; a combination of SARA and intelligence-led policing (ILP); and a combination of SARA and intelligence-led community policing, community prosecution, and community partnerships (IL3CP). Respondents who use SARA in conjunction with another model were included in the “other model” calculations and not in the “uses SARA” calculations.

5. SARA stands for scanning, analysis, response, and assessment. Because every department uses problem solving, five “No, we don’t use SARA” responses and four “We use another model” responses were combined into the same category. Even if they aren’t using SARA, they are using another model.

6. The respondent answered “SMARE” to this question, but it is assumed that this was a typo and SMART was the intended response. Search results for a SMARE problem-solving model were unsuccessful.

Use of the SARA model did not vary significantly depending on the agency's personnel strategy. Of the police departments that take a centralized approach to community policing, 5 of 7 (71 percent) use SARA. Seven of nine (78 percent) decentralized departments and 21 of 26 (81 percent) hybrid departments use SARA.

Most major cities lost personnel

Twenty-eight of 42 departments (66.7 percent) reported losing civilian personnel, sworn personnel, or both since 2008.

- Police departments in the United States lost personnel more than twice as frequently as Canadian departments.
- Six Canadian law enforcement agencies responded to the survey and only two (33.3 percent) reported losing employees in the wake of 2008's economic collapse.
- Of the 36 responding U.S.-based departments, 26 (72.2 percent) reported a reduction in size.
- Both Canadian agencies that reported personnel reductions were done by attrition.
- Three of 26 (11.5 percent) of U.S. departments that lost sworn personnel laid off employees, and 80 percent of sworn personnel reductions resulted from attrition.
- Layoffs contributed to civilian personnel reductions in 8 (30.8 percent) of the 26 U.S. departments that lost employees. Attrition caused civilian personnel losses in 20 (76.9 percent) of those 26 U.S. departments.⁷
- Among the departments that reported personnel reductions, 4,125 sworn and 1,388 civilian positions were lost. That is an average of 188 sworn and 86 civilian positions lost per department.
- Thirteen departments (46.4 percent) lost 100 or more sworn positions. The largest loss by one department was 500.

7. Percentages may not add up to 100 because some departments experienced both attrition and layoffs while other departments did not report the cause of personnel reductions.

- Thirteen departments (46.4 percent) lost 50 or more civilian jobs. The single greatest loss was 309.
- Twenty-nine of 42 departments (69 percent) experienced hiring freezes, 24 (57 percent) saw overtime reductions, and 10 (24 percent) were met with furloughs.

How recession affected community policing activities

Twenty-two departments (52.4 percent) responded that the economic downturn had an effect on their community policing initiatives. Twenty-nine of the 42 respondents (69 percent) listed the specific activities affected by the recession. Their responses can be seen in table 2.

Other programs reportedly affected included elimination of school resource officers, traffic safety fairs, and the loss of safety mascot Scruff McGruff (the nephew of McGruff the Crime Dog). Two departments indicated that all programs were still operating, just on smaller scales due to reduced staffing.

- Five of 7 centralized (71 percent), 5 of 9 decentralized (56 percent), and 18 of 26 hybrid (69 percent) departments responded to this question.
- In-service training was impacted in 3 of 5 (60 percent) responding centralized departments compared with 1 of 5 (20 percent) centralized and 1 of 18 (5.6 percent) hybrid departments.
- Hybrid departments account for 11 of the 13 departments (85 percent) that said foot patrols were impacted by the economic downturn. Decentralized and centralized departments reported one instance apiece.
- Hybrid departments also account for 10 of 11 departments (91 percent) that said bike patrols were impacted by the recession. No decentralized departments claimed any impact to their bike patrol activities.

Table 2. Community policing activities affected by the recession

Answer options	Response percent	Response count
Problem solving	21.4	6
Officer representation at community meetings	42.8	12
Community engagement	25.0	7
Bicycle patrols	39.3	11
Foot patrols	46.4	13
Citizen volunteers	10.7	3
Neighborhood store front offices	42.8	12
Citizen ride-along	7.1	2
Citizen neighborhood patrols	7.1	2
Block watch	10.7	3
Citizen police academy	25.0	7
POP projects assigned/monitored at precinct/division level	21.4	6
Training—recruit	39.3	11
Training— in-service	17.9	5
Other		4*
	Answered question	28
	Skipped question	14

**Note: This number excludes some responses that were irrelevant to the question, i.e., were commenting on other parts of the survey.*

- Three of 5 (60 percent) of centralized and 9 of 18 (50 percent) hybrid departments said the recession had an impact on their ability to provide officer representation at community meetings. No decentralized department reported any impact to this activity.

Community policing commitment steady

Respondents were asked to indicate the level of commitment to community policing demonstrated by command staff, supervisors, officers, political leaders, and the community, both before and after the 2008 recession. Respondents scored each as follows:⁸

8. There was an issue noted with question 4 of the survey that impacted respondents’ ability to answer the question completely. Some respondents provided answers to question 4 in other areas of the survey (in their comments on open-ended questions, for example) and, when provided, these answers were added to the data.

- Commitment to community policing remains generally strong across all categories.
- Political leadership was the only group to receive any “no commitment” ratings in the post-economic downturn results. Two departments gave this rating.
- Officers and political leaders both showed a rating increase of more than .5 points after the economic downturn.
- Community was the only category to see a rating decrease in post-economic downturn commitment.

Table 3. Level of commitment to community policing before the economic downturn

	No commitment (N, %)	Medium commitment (N, %)	Strong commitment (N, %)	Total responses (N)	Average rating (%)
Command staff	1, 3.23	3, 9.68	27, 87.10	31	4.68
Supervisors	0, 0.00	2, 40.00	3, 60.00	5	4.20
Officers	0, 0.00	7, 63.64	4, 36.36	11	3.73
Political leadership	1, 10.00	4, 40.00	5, 50.00	10	3.80
Community	0, 0.00	1, 11.11	8, 88.89	9	4.78
				67	

Table 4. Level of commitment to community policing after the economic downturn

	No commitment (N, %)	Medium commitment (N, %)	Strong commitment (N, %)	Total responses (N)	Average rating (%)
Command staff	0, 0.00	4, 10.00	36, 90.00	40	4.8
Supervisors	0, 0.00	9, 23.68	29, 76.32	38	4.53
Officers	0, 0.00	15, 37.50	25, 62.50	40	4.25
Political leadership	2, 5.13	9, 23.08	28, 71.79	39	4.33
Community	0, 0.00	11, 28.21	28, 71.80	39	4.44
				196	

The purpose of this survey was to gain an understanding about how the Great Recession affected the community policing strategies of MCCA member agencies. Overall, most members experienced some fallout from the financial crisis. A number of departments reported an increase in calls for service, which, when coupled with reduced funding and decreased hiring capacity, presented a unique challenge for community policing initiatives.

However, most law enforcement agencies surveyed remain committed to community policing and have addressed the issues stemming from the financial crisis in a number of ways including organizational restructuring and scaling back or total elimination of some community policing activities. That there remains a strong commitment to community policing is evidenced by the fact that more than 95 percent of surveyed departments say their communities have continued to be engaged in problem solving in the aftermath of the Great Recession.

Overview of Round Table Discussion Themes

A central theme of the round table discussion was the confirmation that community policing has become a tradition. It is no longer viewed as a new policing model; in fact, in some places community policing is now taken for granted. These trends represent a sea change from the early 1990s. Despite that level of acceptance, however, most participants were faced with accommodating budget cuts that impacted community policing. Common trends were consistent with survey results and included layoffs, furloughs, not filling civilian positions, reducing size of squads, eliminating school resource officers (SRO) and specialized units, and cutting forensics. Many agencies supplemented budgets with asset forfeiture and Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO) Act funds. Some hired back retired personnel, outsourced to contractors, or used citizen volunteers to compensate for lost positions. Most maintained community policing throughout the downturn, but it was frequently reconfigured based on economic challenges. This capacity for modification suggests a certain agility not always seen with other policing models. Furthermore, it was clear throughout the discussion that when participants were unable to sustain all elements of community policing because of a lack of funding, their reconfigurations shifted in ways that did not weaken organizational and community networks.

From this perspective, some participants challenged chiefs who have said that community policing was too expensive and not within budget. In their view, attitudes and philosophies intrinsic to community policing do not have price tags. Further, many believed that the economic challenges created opportunities for innovations, such as leveraging technology to its full capacity; engaging community on establishing call priorities, asking the public what they do and do not want agencies to do when it comes to cuts, being realistic as to how much community policing really costs, and seeking new partnerships that may redirect community policing activities such as the use of volunteers or disadvantaged groups who may supplement crime prevention activities. For the most part, there was general agreement that it is important

not to lose sight of the long-term community policing vision for the sake of satisfying short-term goals driven by economic concerns.

Participants discussed which was the better way to engage in community policing during difficult economic times: cops walking beats or cops on Twitter. In contrast to survey results, round table participants reported a significant increase in using technology to compensate for losses in personnel. They use social media, mobile applications, and dynamic websites, bringing community policing into the digital age.

The discussion revealed evolving trends in the ways police executives themselves use digital technology to reach out to the community. Many believe these less formal messaging efforts have made them more integral to the community. It helps executives control and shape their messages in contrast to having the media shape it for them. By all accounts, police interests in connecting with the community on the community's level have been well received. The technological shifts are cost-effective force multipliers that take advantage of the public's interest in helping to keep their communities safe and free of crime. Further, technology provides the capacity to automate tasks that may once have taken police officers much longer to complete manually, like report writing and database searches.

The intersection between community policing, technology, and the digital age provides a blueprint for addressing budget challenges and clearly strikes a new direction for maintaining public safety. Caution is needed, however, since it is unknown whether concerns about data retention, storage, and privacy challenges could eventually override the cost savings. This bears careful watching.

Foundation of Community Policing is Collaboration and Trust

Recurring themes throughout the round table discussion included

- a major focus on collaboration and activities that build trust with communities;
- incorporating community policing into a department's culture;
- treating community policing as an organizational philosophy rather than an independent program.

When integrated into a cohesive and comprehensive leadership framework, budget cuts will not disturb that focus. To achieve that integration, however, leaders need to ensure that all members of the agency grasp the significance of community policing.

Leaders need to ensure that all members of the agency grasp the significance of community policing.

This includes educating officers on the importance of building relationships with people in their communities, their roles as collaborative problem solvers, and the importance of avoiding negative thinking about community policing when budgets are especially tight. Within that context, participants discussed community policing as a commitment to provide services, a perspective that needs to permeate the department and that is integral to the department's culture.

Generalists, Specialists, or Hybrid Models

The roles of generalized, specialized, or hybrid models of community policing was another subject of discussion. Although many departments may say all their officers are community policing officers, round table participants suggest that generalist models are unrealistic. Even though all officers may have the opportunity to engage in community policing, the model suits some officers more than others. Conversely, with specialist models, participants expressed concerns about the risks of creating silos that can result in a split force in which officers not engaged in community policing are perceived as having a warrior mentality. Some believe that a split force mentality also could be perpetuated through too great a reliance on the use of CompStat, although most agreed that CompStat is a valuable metric tool, especially for focusing on the FBI Uniform Crime Report part 1 crimes.⁹ There were questions, however, about CompStat's capacity to address outcomes rather than outputs, along with quality of life issues and long-term problem solving, in the same way that community policing does. Further, some argued that focusing primarily on metrics risks being seen as robotic and polarizing the very communities that could most benefit from community policing, particularly minority communities. They highlighted a potential paradox: communities that could derive the most benefit from community policing are also those that could end up being the most distrustful of the police. Within that context, one could ask the question whether demonstrations relating to how those in poor communities are treated by police are a reflection of that type of paradox.

Communities that could derive the most benefit from community policing are also those that could end up being the most distrustful of the police.

Participants concluded that the hybrid model, which combines community policing philosophies and strategies across patrol and special units, is the most realistic approach, especially during economic downturns and budget cuts. It is also most amenable to the varied adaptations required for reconfiguring how police services can be delivered within flatter or downsized organizations while sustaining community policing.

9. The FBI Uniform Crime Report (UCR) part one crimes are murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny, auto theft, and arson.

Restructuring to Sustain Community Policing

The economic downturn challenged round table participants to flatten or restructure their organizations. Adhering to the hybrid model facilitated the change process, which necessitated corresponding adjustments to community policing strategies and how officers were deployed. Police executives shared the different approaches they used to effect strategic operational changes. Examples include the following:

- Using analytics to redefine areas and assigning police officers to engage in solving problems in those specific areas
- Using light duty officers operating out of a crime reporting center, in contrast to community policing squads, as part of a community oriented government (COG) approach that targets sites and addresses the root causes of crime
- Initiating community improvement programs in which police officers work with citizens in solving problems and establishing service areas where police officers work with designated citizens on quality of life issues
- Returning to foot patrol beats; creating quality response teams that use directed foot patrols to proactively target quality of life crimes
- Deploying community policing units with specified missions; examples include units with an economic development mission directed at enhancing and safeguarding the business community or community burglary response teams that use crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) as a prevention model
- Developing community response teams and making first line supervisors responsible for attending monthly community association meetings
- Developing community response teams that are differentiated from tactical teams or neighborhood response teams that are separate from patrol officers responding to radio calls for service
- Designating “crime solver” officers who go out into the community, rather than having people call in, with the purpose of interacting with the community and increasing community involvement in helping solve specific crimes
- Creating virtual patrols featuring an analyst with a camera who documents events and feeds information to the field in real time
- Constructing real-time crime centers where metrics are aligned and dispatchers and police are able to get real-time information into the right hands for appropriate and timely action
- Increasing use of volunteers and expanding volunteer activities
- Focusing social media attention on individual neighborhoods
- Creating monthly crime prevention newsletters
- Revitalizing neighborhood watch

These approaches employ a combination of metrics, analysis, and officers working in and engaging with communities in different ways. They also reflect changes in how officers are deployed and how tasks are defined both within the department and the community. While the defining parameters varied from agency to agency, they retained the same mission: go out and engage the community to solve community problems and impact the quality of life. Within that context, however it was reconfigured, the focus remained on growing trust within the community—in part by directing police activities to engage with citizens in meaningful and productive ways.

In addition to discussing innovative ways to approach budget problems and maintain community policing, participants frequently talked about the importance of building trust, a clear responsibility for leaders. Throughout the session, participants reiterated the need for chiefs, in concert with officers, to be consistently visible in the community and to listen

to concerns that preoccupy residents. Technology, especially social media and neighborhood apps, creates innovative ways to achieve visibility, develop community connectedness, drive transparency, and build trust.

Some agencies saw the need to reinstitute trust building programs during strict budget periods and revisited programs such as Explorers, Police Athletic League (PAL), Neighborhood Chaplains, and Boy and Girl Scouts while also working with neighborhood organizations such as Neighborhood Watch.

Most agreed that police legitimacy is significantly linked to trust-building activities supported by transparency. In that sense, all seem to be intricately connected to building emotional capital with the community, which was identified as a foundational pillar of trust and legitimacy.

Technology

Beyond previously cited improvements that technology brings to communication and connecting with the community, technology supports crime control through use of surveillance cameras, video technology, shot spotters, license plate readers, GPS tracking, and forensic science. In contrast to other research findings that showed a trend toward cutting back on acquiring new technology in response to budget cuts, this group found that the budget cuts actually made technology innovations possible and urged that technology be leveraged to its fullest extent.

Most believed that transparency and technology, including social media, are intricately connected, and as the community comes to see that connection there are fewer concerns about privacy violations. However, participants were careful to caution that privacy always needs to be factored in when considering use of any technology.

They cited programs such as Safe Communities, in which local businesses and the police partner coordinate use of security cameras in transparent ways. Other uses of emerging technology include the following:

- ▶ Networking sites like Nextdoor.com enable neighborhoods to create private sites that can permit the police to reach out to specific neighborhoods at no cost to the agency.
- ▶ iCAM creates interactive chat rooms. In one example, it is used to establish problem solving dialogues with community members who present information in a live chat to an analyst in a Crime Center. The community develops a sense of ownership by being involved in the presentation and conversation about potential solutions.

Not surprisingly, participants viewed technology as a force multiplier, a method for innovative crime control, and a transparent process that builds trust with the community. In total, it is less expensive than hiring people to fill vacant slots and automated tasks often can be completed more quickly and accurately than those that involve manual responses from officers. Using technology to its fullest potential positions an agency to move in the direction of evidenced-based policing.

Training

There was general agreement that hiring the right people and ensuring they are in law enforcement for the right reasons is the requisite prelude to training to the highest standards. However, state training requirements govern police training and provide little maneuverability for adaptation, making it difficult to change training.

Participants discussed ways to maximize the benefits of training using problem-based learning and promoting community immersion programs as part of the probationary year. Community immersion requires officers to develop deep understanding of a particular area, its residents, and the issues that concern them. As part of the training experience, the officers develop reports documenting their findings.

Participants agreed that regardless of the type of training, it must not occur in a vacuum. While training must focus on building knowledge of laws, policies and procedures as well as tactical behaviors and interpersonal skills, it must also tackle issues like diversity, race relations and management skills. It is critical to preserve training that focuses on immersing officers in the agency culture. Some of this training can be accomplished by partnering with outside organizations such as foundations, institutes or local colleges.

Exploring where technology might benefit training, the concept of e-learning was introduced into the dialogue. It was generally agreed that e-learning works well for some areas, such as familiarizing police personnel with a change in policy, updating specific directives, or reinforcing or prioritizing certain issues. However, it was not recommended for training in community policing. Most believe that philosophies, commitments, and changing attitudes associated with community policing need another type of venue.

Maintaining Community Policing

Round table participants were committed to the community policing mission and managed to maintain their commitment during economic struggles. However, maintaining the commitment as federal grant money is now disappearing presents additional challenges. While it is increasingly common to use volunteers in some capacities once reserved for sworn or civilian personnel, the practice raises issues regarding how best to supervise volunteers. Police supervisors have grown up in the paramilitary model of supervision, and while that supervisory style may be changing, it is something that most volunteers and contractors would neither understand nor appreciate. Establishing boundaries for the kind of work they can and cannot do, given different laws and requisite training, creates other management issues for a department.

Many departments are looking to their federal and state partners to help fill some of the funding and personnel gaps. Some have sought resources from real-time crime centers, while others are asking local school systems to set aside funds to help pay for school resource officers. In Tucson, Arizona, the SRO program that began in the 1960s as part of community policing was eliminated in 2009 when the agency's budget was reduced by 19 percent. School districts didn't fight the loss of SROs at the time but have since wanted them back for security reasons.

Partnering with mental health agencies through crisis intervention teams (CIT) is another option and has been particularly helpful for responding to those experiencing mental or behavioral crises. These initiatives still require people—although perhaps not as many—to staff them. Hence participants looked at increasing overtime budgets or using technology as a force multiplier because buying 20 computers is cheaper than hiring and training 20 new officers.

This new reality requires maintaining downsized levels while leveraging resources differently and employing new strategies that may be unfamiliar to many police commanders. One agency created a budget group for commanders when it became apparent that its commanders, for the most part, did not understand budgets or budget processes. Creating similar groups might be helpful for other management processes during difficult times. Further, having fewer police resources actually requires doing more community outreach because agencies need residents' help to an even greater degree. Participants suggested that information from the community may be more important than knowing where a hot spot is, particularly when diminished staffing prevents sending people to that location. In fact, focusing only on hot spots can create disconnects with the community, especially if it becomes a question of the police getting a set of numbers versus the citizens feeling safe.

What Do Your Colleagues Need to Know?

- ▶ **Right-size the agency and do not over-promise.** The nature of law enforcement is changing and there is a new reality. Departments need to “right-size,” and when budgets increase, leaders must not over-promise because a similar financial downturn may be in the offing. Rather than rehire and then have to lay off personnel, agencies may do better to maintain a lesser but sustainable staffing rate. In other words, right-size your department to avoid reducing staff.
- ▶ **Avoid up and down hiring cycles.** Explore whether there is greater support for funding *something* (e.g., technology, equipment) rather than *somebody* (e.g., sworn or civilian personnel).
- ▶ **Prioritize the philosophy that supports community policing and problem-solving thinking.** This involves changing the mindset of the department, talking about it, providing examples, and living the principles daily.
- ▶ **Enhance outreach to the community.** Develop tools that help you broaden your outreach. It is more important than ever to be out there and listening to community concerns.
- ▶ **Lead from the front.** The police in general and the chief in particular need to be perceived as part of the community. This perception impacts how you set priorities and model behavior because you can’t build emotional capital when you’re sitting behind a desk.
- ▶ **The chief’s message must resonate** throughout the department so officers can effectively convey it in the communities where they work.
- ▶ **Ensure that social media supports your community presence.** It is no longer a nice-to-have element of a communication strategy. Rather, social media is considered integral to the new paradigm. Clear departmental policies and careful monitoring are essential. There are many verified instances of officers posting information before the agency could act.
- ▶ **Find a balance between technology advances and initiatives that can advance community policing.** Communities are more accepting of technological applications, from surveillance and body worn cameras to online crime reporting. People are realizing the business and crime control value that technology can support and are no longer focused only on privacy issues, particularly when departments are transparent about the use of these technologies.
- ▶ **Use cameras as a force multiplier.** Work with businesses to utilize their surveillance cameras, thereby creating a larger network. It is also possible to realize savings when using surveillance cameras as a way to engage in virtual patrolling.
- ▶ **Align metrics, training, and supervision with community policing and building trust.** Like legs of a stool, each has a role in supporting the larger effort.
- ▶ **Consider problem-based training** in contrast to traditional field-training officer training.
- ▶ **Real-time crime centers** introduce savings in both costs and time in that they connect police and detectives with information as criminal events are occurring.
- ▶ **Community policing is not about a hiring grant or attending a meeting.** It is a culture, an attitude, and a commitment to serve the community.
- ▶ **Engaging the community** is more important than ever. It requires becoming more transparent and sharing information through a variety of formal and informal communication channels. It is a relationship that shares responsibility for public safety with members of the community.
- ▶ **Develop volunteer programs.** Volunteers can be one of the best avenues for connecting to the community.

- ▶ **Build trust by opening the doors** and letting the community into our world. Volunteers represent that door and can be the agency's voice in the community.
- ▶ **Find ways to measure outcomes for budget discussions.** Partnering with outside researchers helps ensure objectivity.
- ▶ **Educate the next generation of leaders.** Find ways to continue training, promote educational reimbursement programs, and develop mentoring initiatives.
- ▶ **Continue to ask, "Are we working to solve a problem or putting out fires?"** To really get to the root of problems in communities, particularly violent crime, we have to go beyond deploying officers to hot spots based on predictive equations. Neighborhoods have their own distinct dynamics, and what works in one may not work in others.

Conclusion

Community policing is no longer a novel strategy: it is the way agencies police. While there are variations in how it is implemented, the cornerstones of problem solving and community engagement are widely integrated elements of effective policing. Commitment to community policing is generally high, not just among police executives but also among officers, politicians, and members of the communities they serve. Despite, or perhaps because of, budget cuts resulting from the fiscal crisis, many police departments have doubled down on this strategy as a way to fight crime with fewer personnel and financial resources.

However, it is clear the economic crisis took a toll. About half of the departments participating in the 2014 MCCA survey reported diminished capacity to perform community policing activities at the levels they did before the funding decreases. Many agencies eliminated certain functions altogether, such as school resource officers and educational fairs.

Policing is labor-intensive; community problem-oriented policing is especially demanding of an agency's resources. Yet because it engages members of communities in the business of public safety, it acts as a force multiplier that can offset declines in personnel and other resource areas of a department.

To cope with the new economic reality, executives have restructured their organizations and found ways to offset the negative impacts on police services by leveraging technology, beefing up volunteer programs, and establishing community partnerships. The financial crisis created opportunities for innovation that may not have been pursued with the same vigor prior to 2008.

The economic challenges have unearthed wells of resilience in police departments. They are more nimble and adaptable. They are seeking ways to make organizations more efficient and strengthen relationships with communities to combat crime and increase safety. In fact, if there is a single theme that runs through the survey results and discussions with police executives, it is this: problem-oriented policing has not only survived the changes wrought by the recession; it has helped transform the way police approach their work. Finally, at a time when many police agencies are working to rebuild trust, collaborative problem solving with the community may be more important than ever.

Appendix. Leadership in a New Economy: Sustaining Community Policing

June 17–18, 2014 | Charlotte, North Carolina

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About the Major Cities Chiefs Association

The Major Cities Chiefs Association (MCCA) is a professional association of Chief police executives representing the largest cities in the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom. MCCA membership is composed of chiefs and sheriffs of the 67 largest law enforcement agencies in the United States, the 10 largest in Canada, and the two largest in the United Kingdom. They serve 91.4 million people (70 million in the United States, 11.5 million in Canada, and 9.9 million in the United Kingdom) with a sworn workforce of 241,257 (162,425 in the United States, 21,939 in Canada, and 56,893 in the United Kingdom) officers and nonsworn personnel.

MCCA's strategic goals are to

- ▶ guide national and international policy that affects public safety and major cities;
- ▶ develop current and future police executive leaders;
- ▶ promote innovation and evidenced-based practices in policing.

About the COPS Office

The Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office) is the component of the U.S. Department of Justice responsible for advancing the practice of community policing by the nation's state, local, territory, and tribal law enforcement agencies through information and grant resources.

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.

Rather than simply responding to crimes once they have been committed, community policing concentrates on preventing crime and eliminating the atmosphere of fear it creates. Earning the trust of the community and making those individuals stakeholders in their own safety enables law enforcement to better understand and address both the needs of the community and the factors that contribute to crime.

The COPS Office awards grants to state, local, territory, 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 also provides training and technical assistance to community members and local government leaders and all levels of law enforcement.

The COPS Office has produced and compiled a broad range of information resources that can help law enforcement better address specific crime and operational issues, and help community leaders better understand how to work cooperatively with their law enforcement agency to reduce crime.

- ▶ Since 1994, the COPS Office has invested more than \$14 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.
- ▶ To date, the COPS Office has funded approximately 125,000 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.
- ▶ Nearly 700,000 law enforcement personnel, community members, and government leaders have been trained through COPS Office-funded training organizations.
- ▶ To date, the COPS Office has distributed more than 8.57 million topic-specific publications, training curricula, white papers, and resource CDs.

COPS Office resources, covering a wide breadth of community policing topics—from school and campus safety to gang violence—are available, at no cost, through its online Resource Center at www.cops.usdoj.gov. This easy-to-navigate website is also the grant application portal, providing access to online application forms.

Community Policing in the New Economy addresses how the recession of 2008–2012 affected community policing activities in police agencies across the country and describes the severe budget cuts police leaders were forced to make. Based on survey data from the Major Cities Chiefs Association membership and a subsequent round table dialogue with chiefs and academic researchers, the impact of these cuts was felt in a range of areas related to community policing; they have created a “new reality” in law enforcement’s eyes. But the survey results and round table dialogue also reveal that leaders have remained steadfast in their commitment to community policing, which has become ingrained into contemporary law enforcement as a predominant philosophy supported by problem-solving practices and community engagement. This publication highlights key operational strategies used to continue that commitment and makes a series of practical recommendations to leaders on continuing to move forward during difficult times.



COPS
Community Oriented Policing Services
U.S. Department of Justice

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To obtain details about COPS Office programs, call the COPS Office Response Center at 800-421-6770.

Visit the COPS Office online at www.cops.usdoj.gov.



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To obtain details about MCCA programs, call the Major Cities Chiefs Association at 202-828-1260.

Visit the Major Cities Chiefs Association online at <https://majorcitieschiefs.com>.

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