

The Heath Police Department

Strategic Plan 2017 – 2020

Fiftieth Anniversary



2013

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Message from Chief Dave Haren....

Since the last update of our plan in 2014 much has happened. In November of 2015 the department was re-accredited for the seventh time at by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies.

The department celebrated our fiftieth anniversary in 2013 when the then Village of Heath established a police department in and appointed Richard Steele as the first Chief of Police.

In 2013 the department installed new mobile data computers and mobile video in all the marked cars. This enhancement has led to increased mobile productivity and prosecution of offenders. Since the installment of mobile video and audio recording we have experienced a drop in citizen complaints against officers as well.

Chief John Mason retired in March of 2016. I was selected as Chief of Police through a testing and interview process. I had 23 years plus experience at Newark Division of Police, and over 27 years of experience in the Criminal Justice field. It has been an incredible experience working with such dedicated personnel throughout the Heath Police Department and the city of Heath.

The industrial base in the city continues to expand and there has been expansion in our industrial areas with the designation as a community reinvestment area. The special tax status has helped to lure these companies to the city. The Licking County/Heath/Newark Port Authority works closely with our city government to make Heath a special place for future development.

Employment figures in Licking County are high compared to the state and national averages. In 2016 citizens of the city of Heath approved a tax levy increase to improve safety services and city services in general. In 2017 The police department will add two full time sworn police officers and continually work to improve our delivery of professional police services to the City of Heath.

This addition of personnel is a step in the right direction. All members of the Police Department have been doing more with less. Personnel within the Police department has be reduced over the years by attrition due to budgetary concerns. It is a great relief to be adding personnel.

Our officers, dispatchers, and civilian personnel do an outstanding job. I say this from personal experience, community comments and from citizen surveys. Attached you will find our 2017 citizen survey that shows an overwhelming majority of those polled favor the work performed by these men and women.

Yours,
David W. Haren
Chief Police

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PURPOSE

While a strategic plan is a written document, more importantly it is a process that will allow this agency to stay focused on its priorities and carry out its mission. Without this planning process our efforts, resources, and attention go unchecked in addressing a multitude of issues and our ability to achieve our mission is diminished. An agency that stays focused only on day-to-day concerns becomes totally reactive and tends to stifle creativity and innovation.

A strategic plan is a blueprint that enables an organization to meet the challenges of the future. It is a process by which an organization's vision, goals, and objectives are defined, implemented, evaluated, and updated on a continual basis as a means to adapt and thrive in an ever-changing environment.

PLAN DEVELOPMENT

This Strategic Plan began with general concepts and philosophical ideas concerning public safety and concluded with specific yearly tasks to achieve desired goals and objectives. The Mission, Values, and Vision statements indicate the broad range of beliefs, responsibilities, and services of the Department. Goals and objectives more specifically define what needs to take place to meet current and future demands.

Written tasks state as precisely as possible the necessary actions to ensure success. Before any organization can effectively plan for the future, it must first define why it exists and what functions it performs.

The Department's Mission Statement describes our purpose, and our reason for existence. Our mission statement was developed and endorsed by the members of this department. It serves to provide guidance and direction for decision making and set standards for appropriate employee behavior.

MISSION STATEMENT

*To provide professional law enforcement services in partnership with our community and emphasizing **Integrity, Accountability, and Respect.***

The final component of our first steps was the establishment of the vision for the Department. It provides a framework for moving the Department into the future.

VISION STATEMENT

To become one of the country's premier law enforcement agencies through:

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Innovation, Technology, Job Satisfaction, & Community Sensitive Policing

Considering these guiding principles led to the development of the department's goals. This document is our roadmap to reach the long-term goals we've established for ourselves. Each goal lists the required operational objectives that contribute to goal achievement. For each objective are detailed strategies to reach them. We've determined where we are now and where we must be by year's end in 2018.

HEATH POLICE DEPARTMENT TODAY

The Heath Police Department was established in 1963 with a Chief and one full-time patrolman. The Heath Police Department currently has eighteen sworn officers, six full-time dispatchers, and two clerks.

The Heath Police Department is a progressive and service oriented agency that responds to approximately 16,000 calls for service a year. In July of 1997, the Heath Police Department became an internationally accredited law enforcement agency through the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies of Fairfax, Virginia and was re-accredited in 2003, 2006, 2009 (attained the distinction of CALEA Flagship Agency) and 2012.

The Chief of Police now serves as the Patrol Commander and is assisted by four Patrol Sergeants. They and 9 patrol officers provide twenty-four hour continuous service to the citizens and business community of Heath. The patrol officers of the Heath Police Department also investigate a wide variety of criminal offenses in addition to their traffic enforcement duties.

The Detective Section is staffed by two criminal investigators and supervised by Sergeant Craig Black. They are responsible for all priority one crimes such as homicide, burglary, and armed robbery. In addition to supervising criminal investigations, he is responsible for property room management and records/public information.

Economic conditions continue to prevent the department from filling three sworn positions lost due to attrition. The department had a previous authorized strength of 21 sworn officers, last seen in 2003.

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LOOKING AHEAD THROUGH 2017

The 2010 Census shows Heath's population to be 10,310. A 21% increase from 2000. The housing boom brought Heath this increase during the first decade of the new millennium. In the last several years however Heath has seen very few homes built and the new neighborhoods began during the boom have many lots sitting empty for quite some time. Heath also experienced the foreclosures that nationwide left homes empty for extended periods. In the coming years there is no reason to expect such a substantial increase in population to effect the city services.

Although the total call volume of 14,949 for 2016 is not the highest number for calls for service in a year, the total number of police calls, at 16,311, is the highest police call volume the Heath Police Department has experienced.

Over the course of 2016, there was a general increase in criminal and traffic activity to which the Heath Police Department responded. This is consistent with the trend over the last decade. There were no specific spikes in any one type of call that would indicate any need for more specific action on the part of the Heath Police Department.

STRATEGIC PLAN ORGANIZATION

This plan is simply one of maintaining the excellence in service the department has have achieved within our current budget. By adding two full time officers to replace positions vacated years ago, the goal is to improve services and also reduce the workload and overtime demands on the entire department.

There is no exact timetable associated with each goal, but rather, a commitment to reach full implementation by December 31, 2020. Administration of this plan is the responsibility of the Chief of Police.

Due to the new levee passage there is a new source of revenue realized so that we may continue the high performance and best customer service driven police department we have been. Any realization of increased revenues from new industry will be offset by the tax status granted. It will take years beyond this plan to see any significant boost from these new additions to the local economy.

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GOAL 1: Patrol staff increase

OBJECTIVE: Add two new police officers to the Patrol division

Based on the proposed income tax levee passage and attached City Council resolutions. If the levee passes the Police Department will be approved to hire two additional officers to replace positions lost to attrition in previous years. This resolution has the support of the Mayor and Council. Based on the passage of the levee, the testing and hiring process, and field training the new officers will be assigned based on analysis of call volumes and work load per day and time.

GOAL 2: Improve the Department's Security

OBJECTIVE:

The department currently has a camera system that is functional, but aging . The goal is to improve the camera coverage and access. Additionally, there is no camera coverage of the parking area or exterior sidewalks. As a safety issue it would be prudent to provide camera coverage of the parking area. Optimally, it would be of great assistance to add a tv monitor near the main officer entrance and exit displaying the approach to the doorway. This would prevent injuries from the opening door and assist in making a safer exit for officers.

The department uses a Hubman door control system on the employee entrance and exit door. Though other doors have electronic controls they are only accessed with the assistance of the dispatcher. It is the goal to improve door control access and to lock the exterior doors of the lobby during night hours to improve safety within the facility.

- Replace the cameras.
- Add exterior cameras.
- Improve Door control system.
- Tint lobby windows.
- Improve Lighting and Signage.

GOAL 3: Replace Police Vehicles (Reduce Maintenance Costs)

OBJECTIVE: Replace police vehicles on rotation plan

The current plan is to replace two cars each year. In 2013 the Mayor approved the replacement of a total of three vehicles, two regular patrol cars. In 2017 the fleet was expanded with the addition of Cruiser 10. Adhering to the 2 vehicle replacement plan will limit cruiser down time and repair costs and maintain high quality vehicles for emergency responses.

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- Adhere to current vehicle replacement schedule
- Replace 1 patrol cars / 1 unmarked in 2016
- Add 1 patrol cars / 1 unmarked in 2017

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The Chief is responsible to oversee the implementation of the plan. He will be assisted in this endeavor by the administrative sergeant. The Chief will delegate tasks to others as necessary, but the completion or failure of the plan is upon him.

All reviews of the plan and any revisions will be conducted by the Chief during implementation.

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2017 Citizen Survey Report

Overview

The 2017 citizen survey was mailed out to 500 utility customers in January 2017. The surveys were then reviewed in July 2017. The Police Department mails similar surveys every three years as part of the re-accreditation process for the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA). According to research, many Americans are more likely to complete surveys they receive via mail as opposed to online surveys. A total of 56 surveys were returned which accounts for about a 11% return.

Demographics

The survey is completed anonymously. The only demographics information asked for is the length of residency in the city (Chart1) and type of residency (apartment, townhouse, condo or single-family residence. Of the 56 returns, 51 listed their home as single-family residence, 3 as condos and 2 as apartment renters.

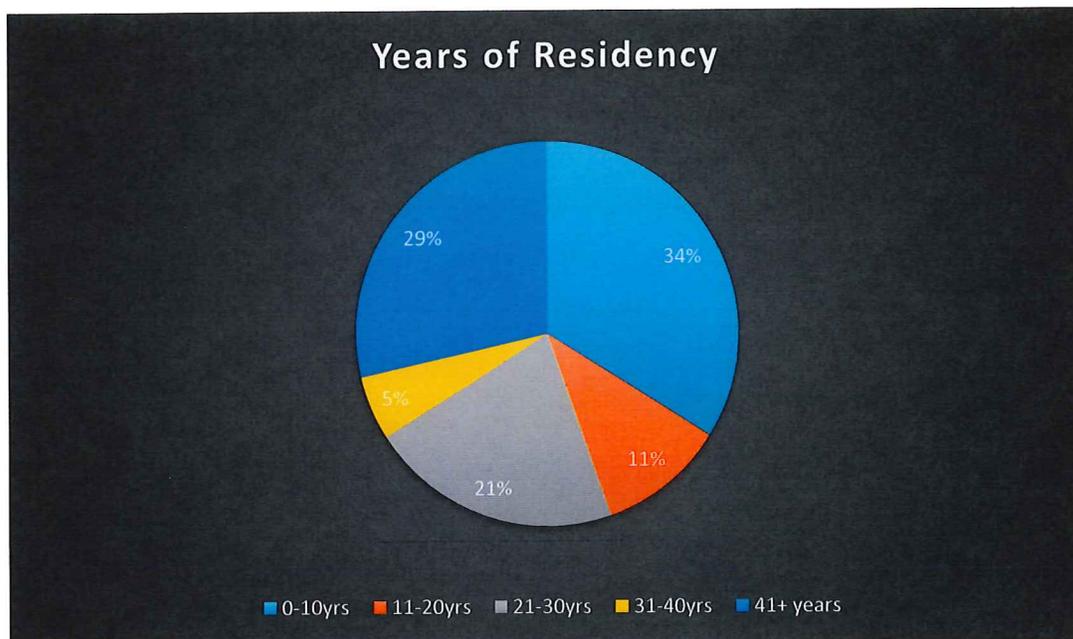


Chart 1

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Citizen Opinions of Officers

The first section of questions focuses on citizens observations and/or interactions with officers and their performance. Citizens graded the interaction based on competency, demeanor, fairness, courtesy and overall performance.

The questions are followed by a grading scale 1-5 with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent (Graph1). It should be noted that not all residents completed this section as it only pertains to those that had actual contact with a police officer. From those that that provided an opinion, their OVERALL experience is listed as follows:

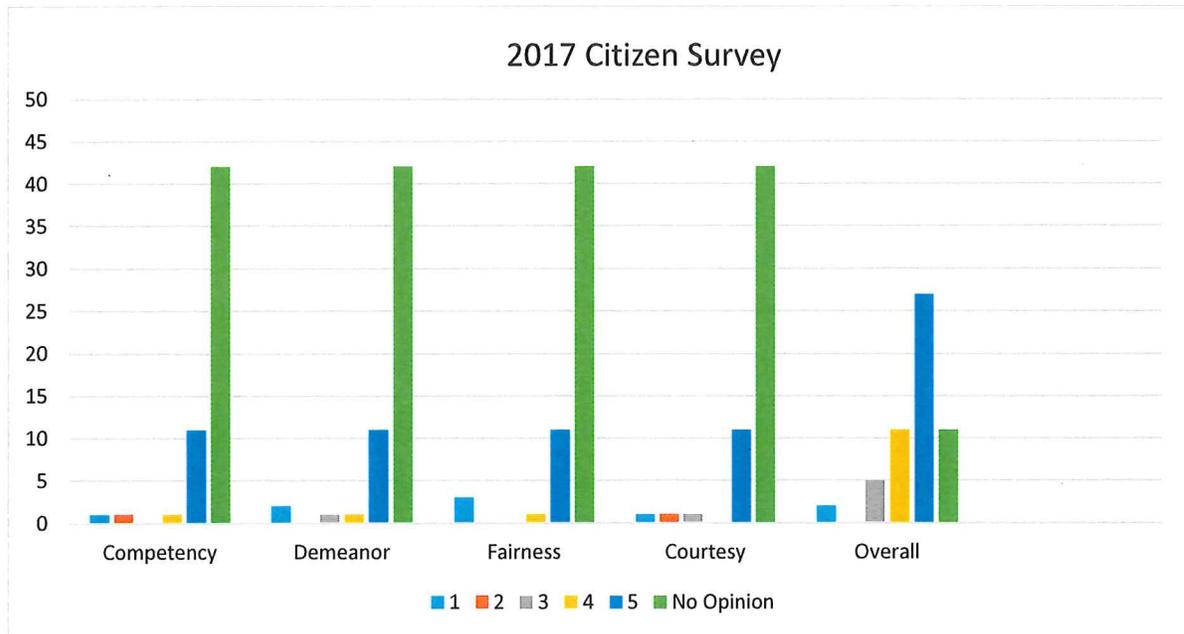
Rate of 1: 4% Poor

Rate of 2: 0%

Rate of 3: 11%

Rate of 4: 24%

Rate of 5: 60% Excellent



Graph 1

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Citizen Opinions of Safety

The next series of questions focuses on the resident's feelings of safety within the city and critique of police services. After reviewing the responses, the results show a vast majority satisfied with police services and feel safe within their communities.

Safety	Very	Somewhat	Not Safe	Not Very
How safe do you feel walking alone in your neighborhood at night?	44%	42%	7%	N/A
How concerned are you of becoming a victim of a serious crime in Heath?	0%	37%	N/A	62%
How concerned are you of becoming a victim of a lesser crime in Heath?	.02%	52%	N/A	46%
Police Services	Excellent	Good	Poor	No Opinion
How would you rate traffic enforcement in Heath?	20%	59%	5%	16%
How would you rate the amount of police visibility in your neighborhood?	20%	52%	12%	16%
How would you rate the amount of police visibility in the community in general?	27%	57%	5%	10%

Police Services

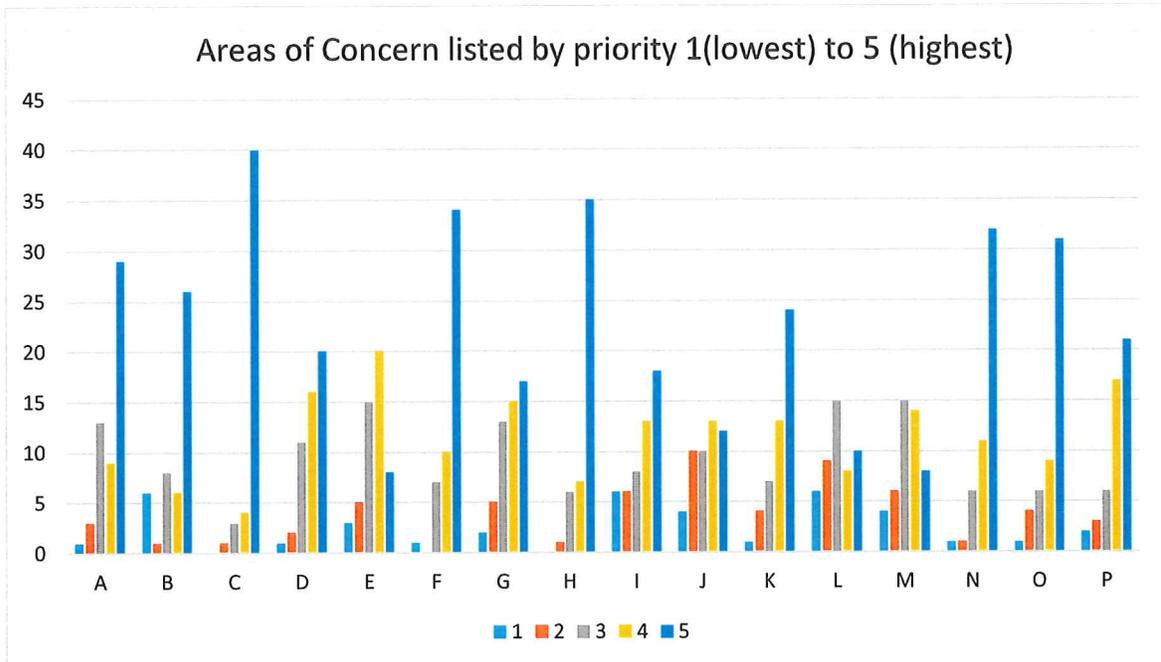
The final series of questions is a list of 16 topics that the residents are asked to rate by level of importance on how much attention the police department should provide. The priority rating is listed 1(lowest) to 5 (highest) which can be studied in Graph2. Listed in order by priority is as follows:

1. Responding to crimes in progress or ones that have just occurred
2. Enforcement of intoxicated driving laws
3. Investigation of felony crimes
4. Investigating and discouraging illegal drug activity in the City
5. Discouraging gang activity in the city
6. Providing 24-hour crime prevention/patrol services to all areas of the City
7. Notifying citizens of the potential for criminal activity
8. Discouraging sales to and use of alcoholic beverages to minors
9. Providing drug abuse and other education to the students in Heath Schools
10. Responding to property crimes for the purpose of initiating an investigation
11. Discouraging automobile accidents in general
12. Enforcement of traffic laws (i.e. speeding, red lights, etc.)
13. Enforcement of parking laws (i.e. handicap, fire lanes, etc.)
14. Enforcing noise related ordinances (i.e. barking dogs, loud cars/music, etc.)

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15. Mediating neighborhood disputes

16. Investigation of lesser (misdemeanor) crimes in general



Graph 2

LEGEND for Graph 2	
A.	Providing 24-hour crime prevention/patrol services to all areas of the City
B.	Notifying citizens of the potential for criminal activity
C.	Responding to crimes in progress or ones that have just occurred
D.	Responding to property crimes for the purpose of initiating an investigation
E.	Investigation of lesser (misdemeanor) crimes in general
F.	Investigation of felony crimes
G.	Enforcement of traffic laws (i.e. speeding, red lights, etc.)
H.	Enforcement of intoxicated driving laws
I.	Discouraging automobile accidents in general
J.	Enforcement of parking laws (i.e. handicap, fire lanes, etc.)
K.	Discouraging sales to and use of alcoholic beverages to minors
L.	Enforcing noise related ordinances (i.e. barking dogs, loud cars/music, etc.)
M.	Mediating neighborhood disputes
N.	Investigating and discouraging illegal drug activity in the City
O.	Discouraging gang activity in the city
P.	Providing drug abuse and other education to the students in Heath Schools

Conclusion

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The community has given the Heath Police Department positive feedback overall. A few of the residents have also added in their own suggestions of improvement.

1. Increased traffic enforcement on residential streets and the main route of SR79.
2. Improve community relations with residents with face to face contact.
3. Crime activity notification to residents.

These suggestions are well taken and should be incorporated into the policing plans of the Heath Police Department.

Report Completed by Sgt. EJ Smart 8/1/17