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# Fort Worth Police Department

2014 Annual Report

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# Fort Worth Police Department

## 2014 Annual Report

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# Introduction

Fort Worth was incorporated in 1873 and is now one of the fastest growing cities in the nation with 781,100 residents in 2014. Covering 350 square miles, Fort Worth is the fifth largest city in Texas and the sixteenth largest in the United States. Fort Worth continues to grow and prosper as a destination for business creation and expansion, world-class museums, and recreational attractions. Fort Worth's humble beginnings in the late 1800s have shaped the modern police force the Fort Worth Police Department (FWPD) has since become.

Technological advances in the twentieth century helped the department keep pace with the challenges of a growing city. However, reminiscent of its wild frontier days, crime became rampant in the late 1980s and early 1990s, giving Fort Worth one of the highest crime rates in the nation. To respond, FWPD adopted the community-oriented policing philosophy, in which the department formed partnerships throughout the city, including neighborhood organizations, businesses, and volunteers, to organize a grassroots, community-based campaign to fight crime. Fort Worth continues to utilize the community-policing model through Neighborhood Patrol Officers assigned to each beat, Citizens on Patrol Program, and community forums. The coupling of community-oriented and intelligence-led policing has enhanced the department's abilities to address criminal activity throughout the city, creating one of the safest communities in the nation.

## 2014 Highlights

- ◆ Voters approved five-year renewal of Crime Control and Prevention District (CCPD)
- ◆ Several FWPD facilities opened, including Tactical Center, indoor Weapons Range at Public Safety Complex, Mounted Patrol Equestrian Center, and One Safe Place (Safe City Commission)
- ◆ Department awarded Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Hiring grant to hire 15 additional officers to staff a Real Time Crime Center and sixth Zero Tolerance Team
- ◆ Created 20-year Police Facilities Plan
- ◆ Began update of Five-Year Strategic Plan
- ◆ Expansion of FWPD social media

## Change of Command

In late 2014, Chief Jeffrey W. Halstead announced his intention to retire from the Fort Worth Police Department after six years of service as Chief of Police. Assistant Chief Rhonda K. Robertson was selected to serve as Chief in the interim as a nation-wide search for the next Fort Worth Police Chief is conducted. The change of command ceremony from Chief Halstead to Chief Robertson occurred in January 2015.



Chief Jeffrey W. Halstead

# 2014 Department Organization

The Fort Worth Police Department is composed of three administrative bureaus, each headed by an assistant chief responsible for the department's specific, day-to-day operations:



Asst. Chief Pridgen

The **Patrol Bureau** provides primary police services, including responding to calls for service, engaging in details and crime prevention activities, investigating criminal activity, enforcing traffic regulations, apprehending criminals, and the overall protection of life and property.



Asst. Chief Robertson

The **Support Bureau** provides specialized tactics and investigations of all crime. The Support Bureau also trains new police recruits and current officers, provides forensic analyses to solve crimes, and provides crime prevention activities.



Asst. Chief Garcia

The **Finance/Personnel Bureau** provides fiscal and personnel management, internal affairs, technology services, strategic planning, program support, the processing and storage of all departmental records and acquired property, and the maintenance of all fleet vehicles.

In addition to the three bureaus listed above, Police Administration—led by an administrative captain—provides the necessary support services for effective and efficient departmental operations, including special investigations and public relations.

Fort Worth is divided into five patrol divisions—Central, North, East, South, and West—each consisting of four zones and between 15 and 17 beats, for a citywide total of 81 beats. The patrol divisions and beats are displayed on the map on page 10. FWPD incorporates beat patrols into their operations in order to provide the most efficient police operations. The beat concept allows officers to combat and prevent crime in specific geographical areas of the city.

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# FWPD 2014 Organizational Chart

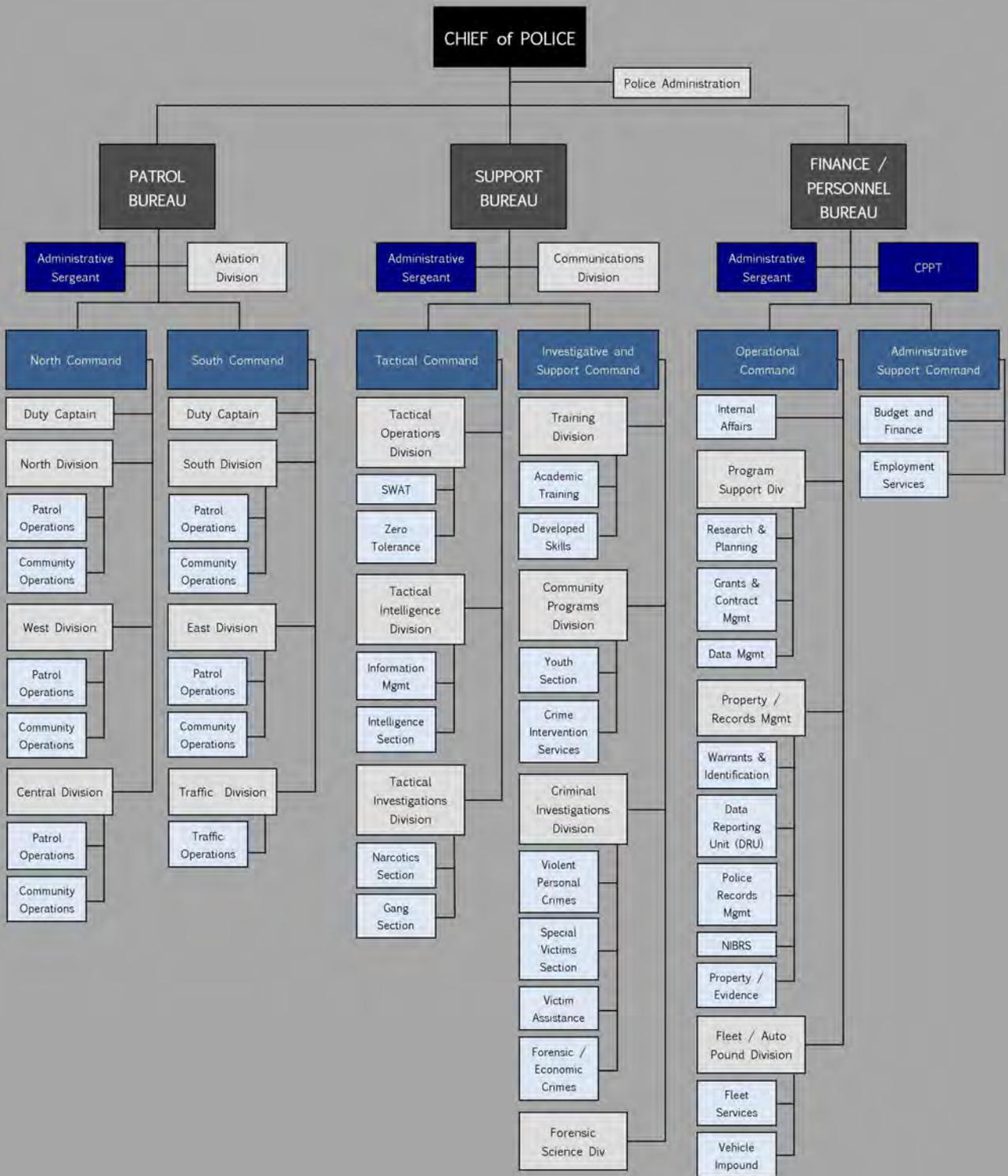
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# FWPD Patrol Divisions and Beats, 2014

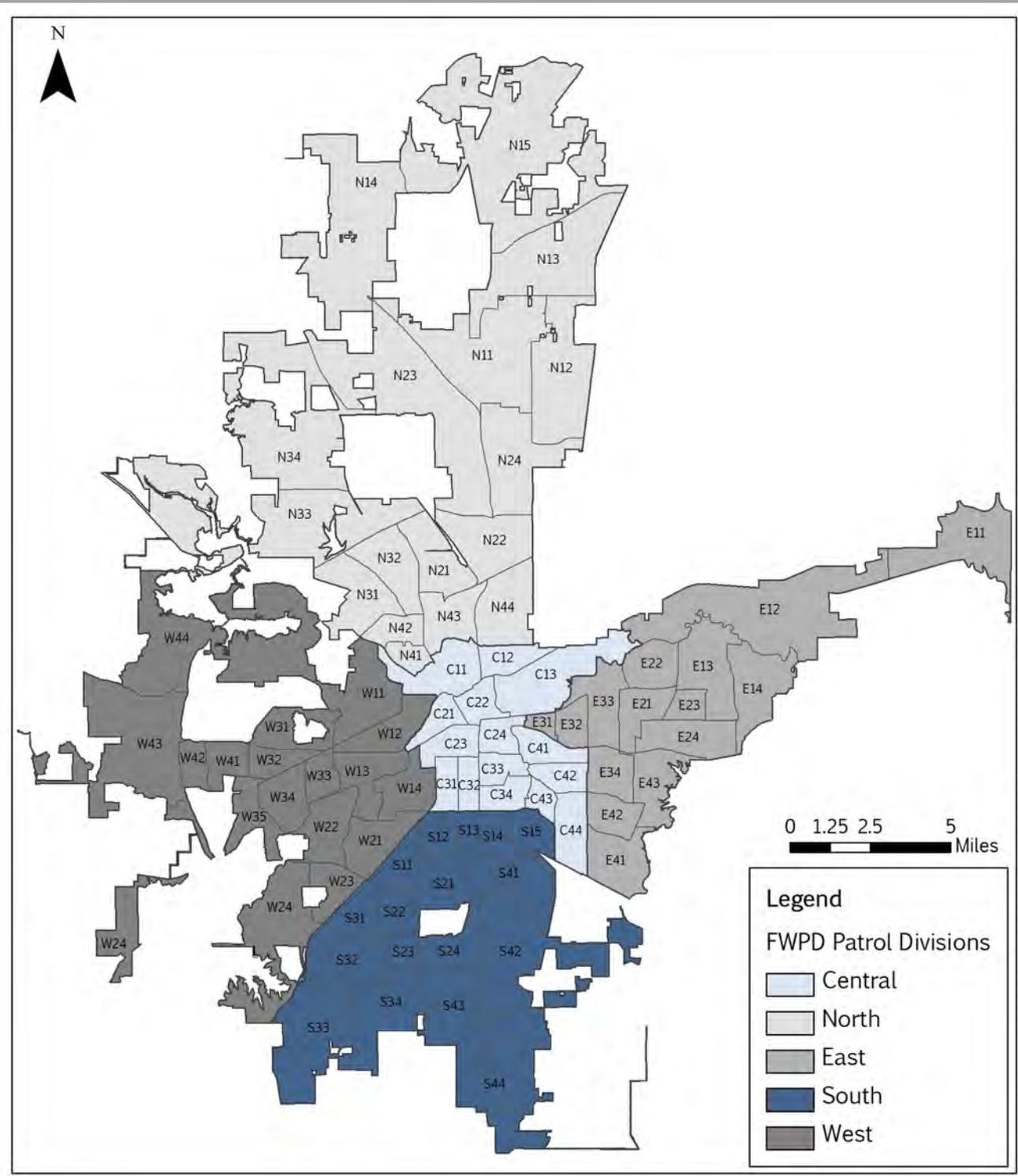
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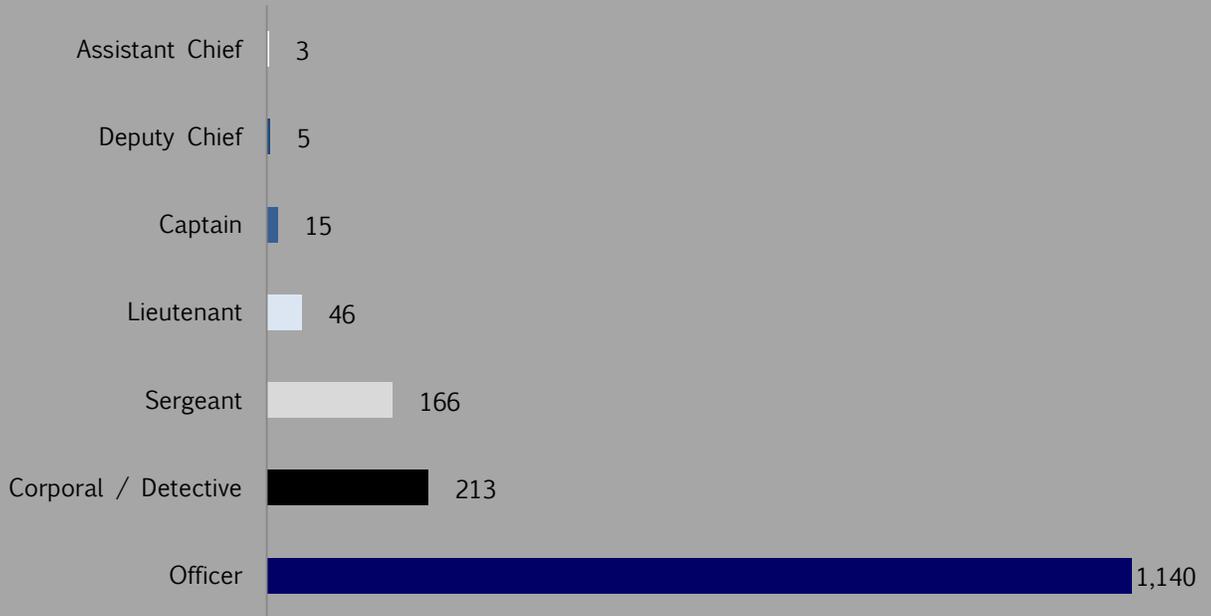
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# FWRPD Personnel

As of December 31, 2014, the Fort Worth Police Department employed an authorized strength of 1,588 civil service and 454 civilian staff members. The number of authorized civil service positions are separated by rank in the chart below. In 2014, there was one officer for every 492 residents in Fort Worth.

### FWRPD Authorized Positions by Rank, 2014



The department graduated two recruit classes in 2014. Thirty-eight recruits graduated from Class 135 in May, and 20 recruits graduated from Class 136 in October, adding a total of 58 officers to the FWRPD police force. Class 135 attracted recruits from Connecticut, Illinois, Louisiana, as well as other countries, including Ghana, Germany, Costa Rica, and France.



# Call Load and Response Time Summary

Introduction



FWPD **received** 298,984 calls for service in 2014

**+1.5%**  
from 2013

Department Overview

Priority

**1**

Priority

**2**

Priority

**3**

22,742 calls

212,165 calls

64,077 calls

8:54  
avg. response

17:18  
avg. response

52:00  
avg. response

8:36  
response goal

15:07  
response goal

40:46  
response goal

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Average response time for Priority 1 calls was 8 minutes, 54 seconds in 2014

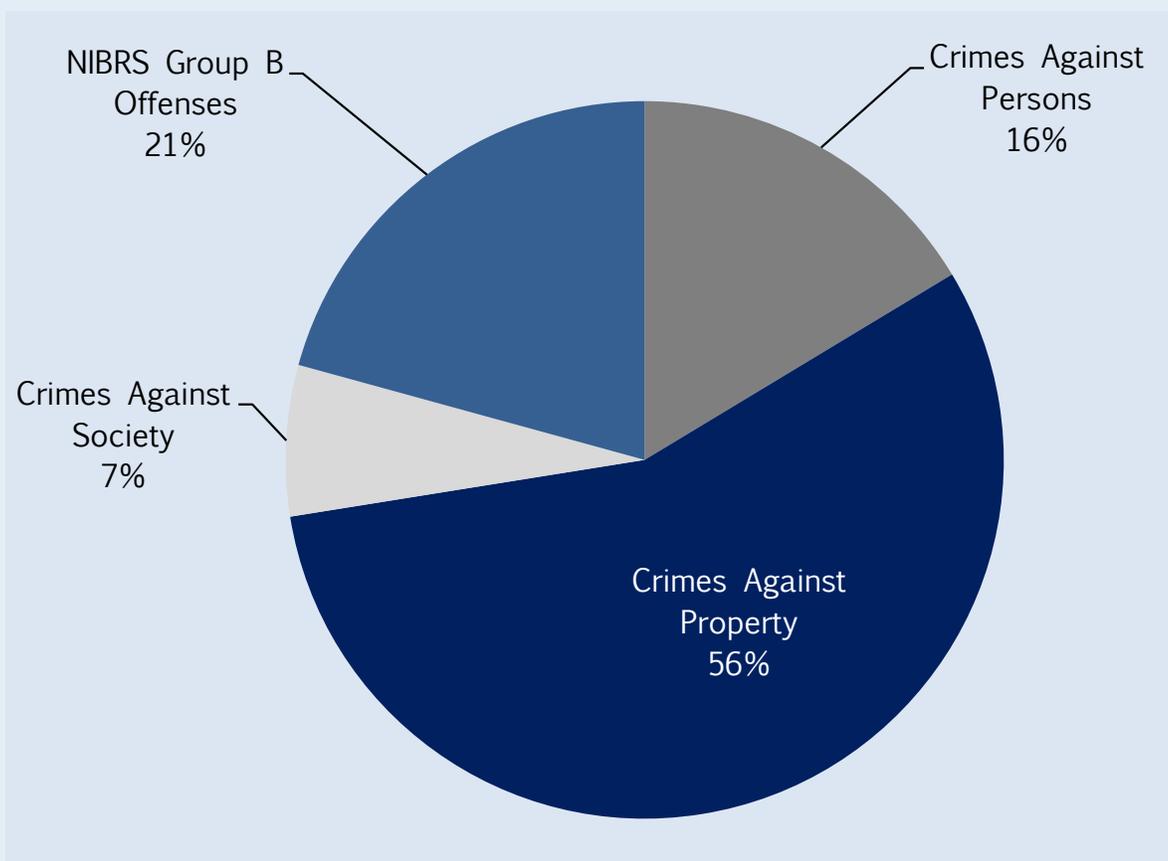
**+5.3%**  
from 2013

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# 2014 Crime Summary

The Fort Worth Police Department uses the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) to provide a comprehensive and accurate summary of criminal activity in Fort Worth. With NIBRS, FWPD has the capability to generate crime reports that reflect interrelationships within the data, enhancing the ability to analyze crime trends and implement successful prevention and tactical strategies. NIBRS data is compiled into detailed reports for two types of offenses: Group A offenses (crimes against persons, property, and society) and Group B offenses. The two groupings are based upon the amount of reporting needed for each. Incidents and arrests are reported for Group A offenses, considered the most serious and prevalent offenses, while only the number of arrests account for Group B offenses.

## Percent of Total Crime by Type, 2014

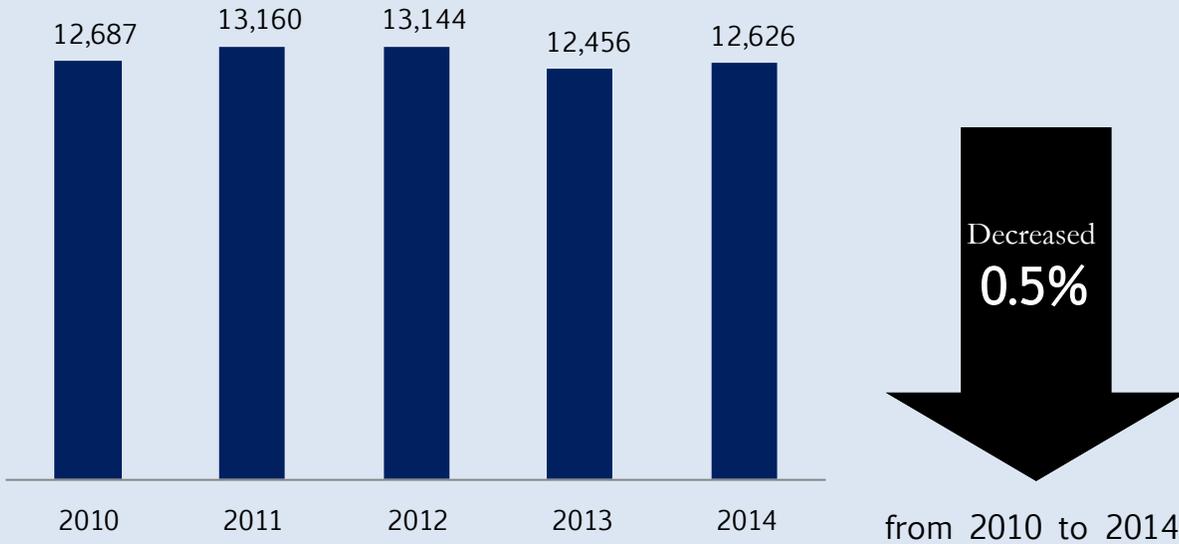


A total of 77,204 offenses occurred in Fort Worth in 2014, a nearly 4.0 percent decrease from 2013. The majority (56 percent) of the offenses are property-related, which declined 5.5 percent from 2013 to 2014. Crimes Against Persons accounted for 16 percent of all offenses, and there was a 1.4 percent increase from 2013. Approximately 7.0 percent of offenses were Crimes Against Society, and approximately 21 percent were NIBRS Group B offenses in 2014.

Greater detail regarding 2014 NIBRS offenses is provided on the following pages.

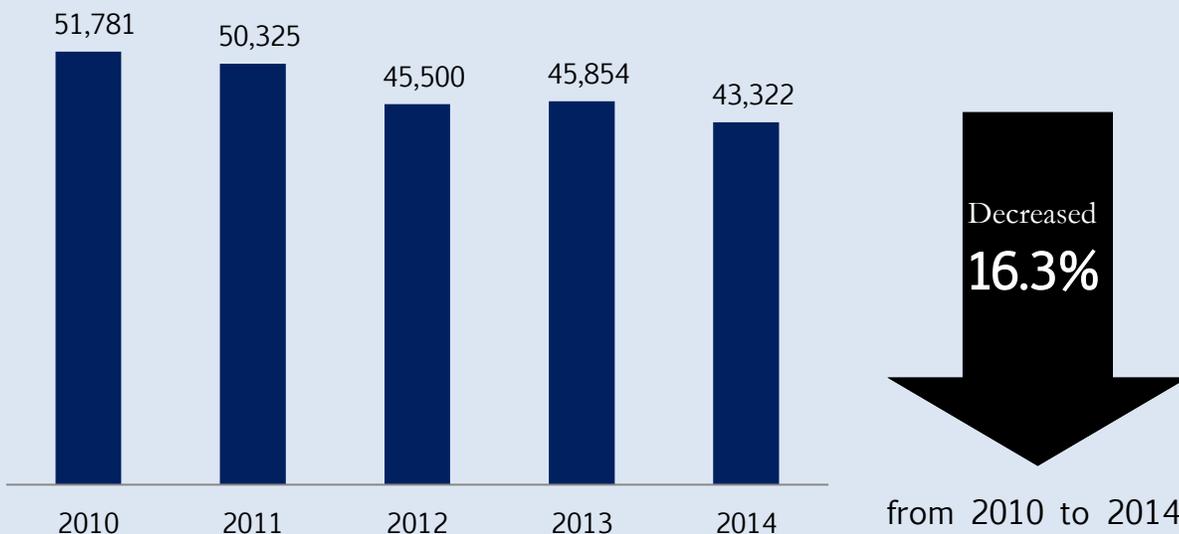
# 2014 Crime Summary

## Crimes Against Persons



Crimes Against Persons, including assault offenses, kidnappings, murders, and forcible sex offenses, fell 0.5 percent between 2010 and 2014.

## Crimes Against Property



From 2010 to 2014, property crime decreased 16.3 percent, including burglary, theft/larceny, motor vehicle theft, and robbery offenses.

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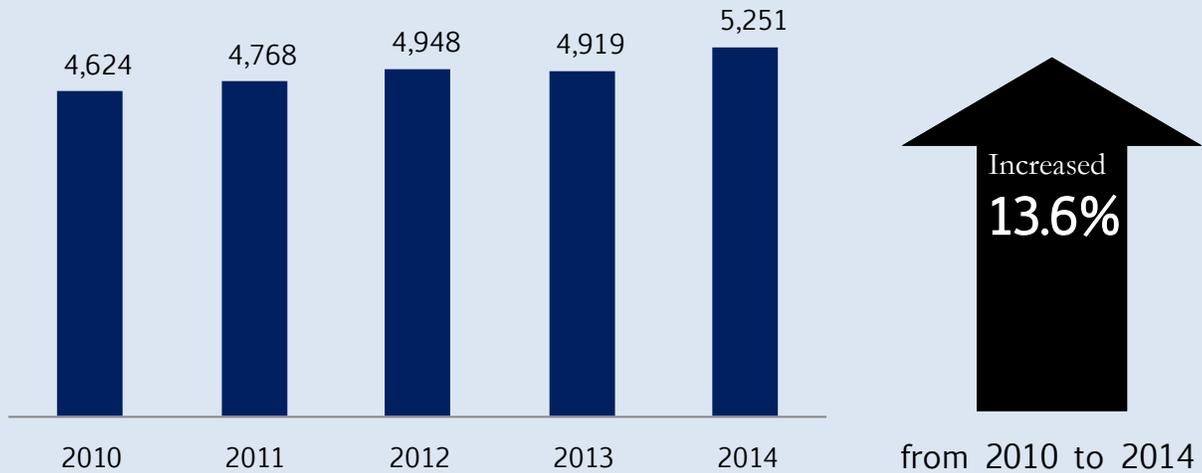
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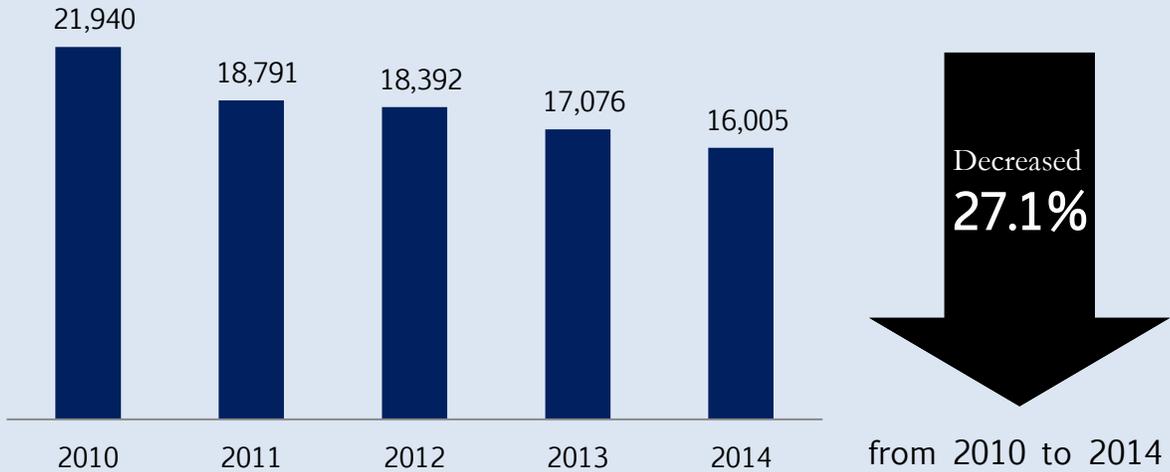
# 2014 Crime Summary

## Crimes Against Society



Crimes Against Society, including drug and narcotic violations, prostitution, and weapons violations, increased 13.6 percent between 2010 and 2014. The increase can attributed to enhanced enforcement efforts.

## NIBRS Group B Offenses

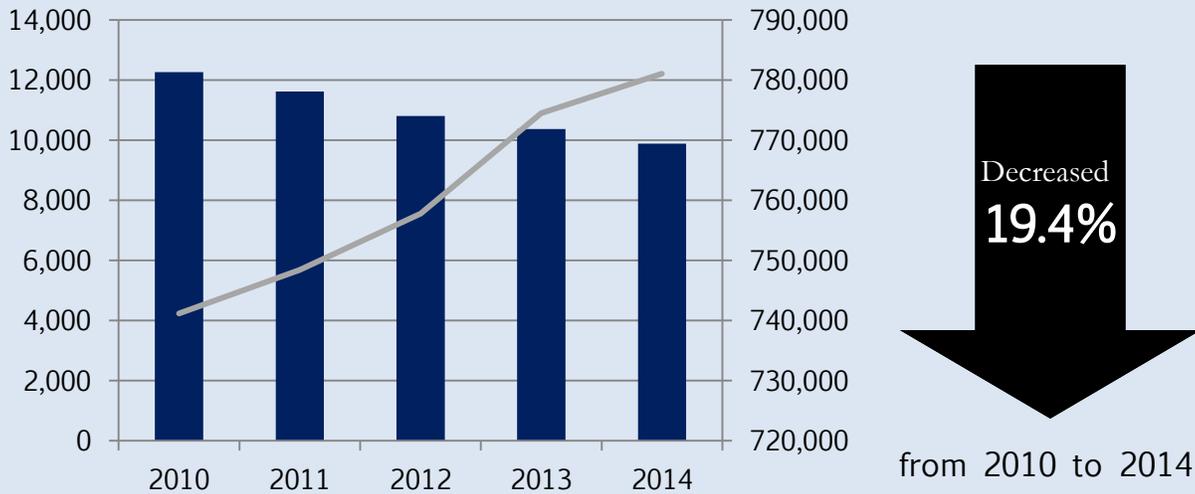


Since 2010, NIBRS Group B Offenses have declined 27.1 percent throughout Fort Worth.

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# 2014 Crime Summary

## Crime Rate



In 2014, 9,884.01 offenses occurred for every 100,000 residents. Since 2010, Fort Worth has experienced a 19.4 percent reduction in the crime rate, and a 5.4 percent increase in population.

## Arrest Summary



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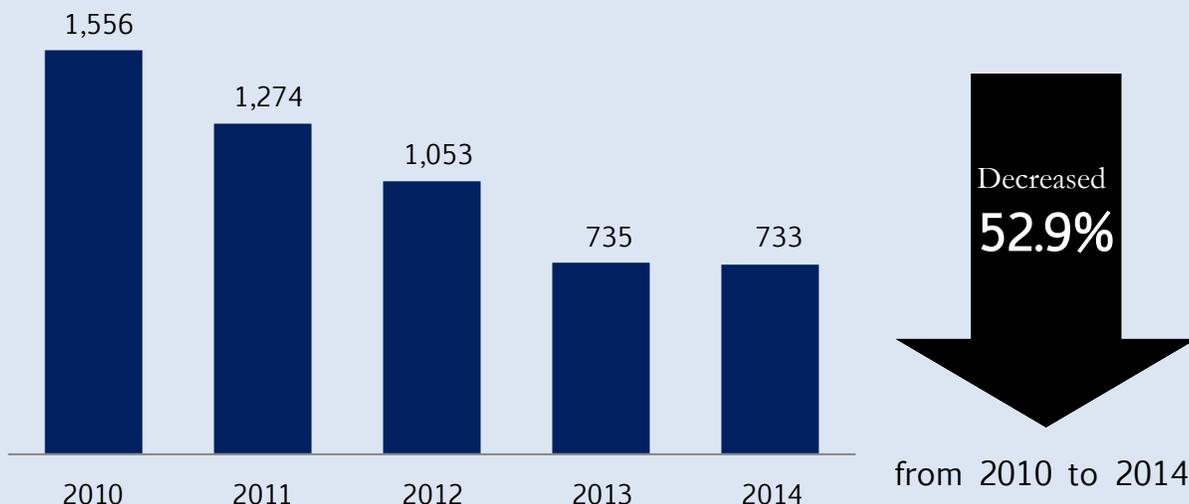
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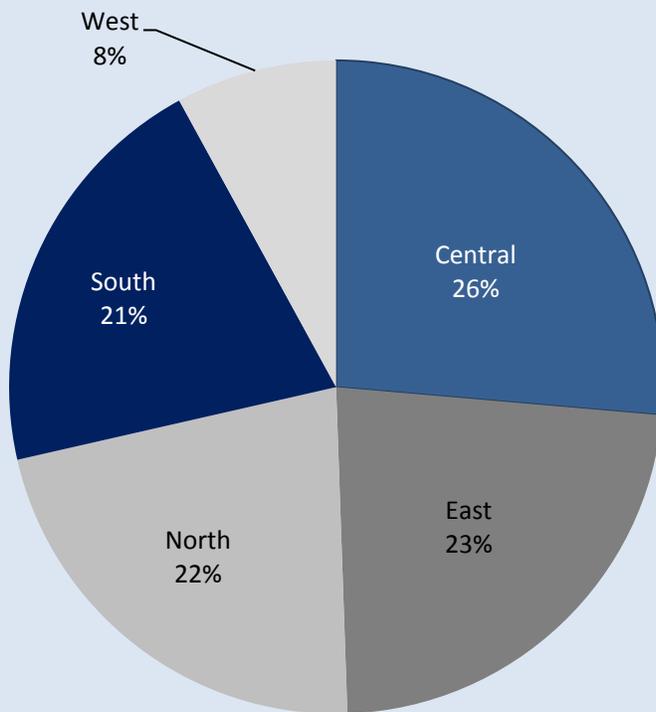
## Gang-Related Crime



Gang-related crime is any criminal act including, but not limited to, those involving gang members or associates that are committed for the benefit or furtherance of any criminal gang.

In 2014, there was a total of 733 gang-related offenses in Fort Worth, a 52.9 percent decrease from 2010. Gang-related crime occurred most frequently in Central Division (26 percent) in 2014, and West Division had the least amount of gang-related crime citywide (eight percent).

## Gang-Related Crime by Division, 2014



# Crime Control and Prevention District Summary

The City of Fort Worth utilizes the Crime Control and Prevention District (CCPD), a voter-approved half-cent sales tax, to fund crime prevention tools and programs. In response to Fort Worth having historically-high crime rates throughout the 1980s and early 1990s, the CCPD was approved in 1995 to enhance FWPD's ability to create and maintain a safe environment through efficient, quality service, and strong community partnerships. The CCPD is overseen by a nine-member board of directors that establishes the annual budget, manages expenditures, and evaluates all programs funded by the district.

The revenue from the half-cent sales tax funds nearly 40 programs and critical resources to effectively combat and prevent crime in Fort Worth. The total CCPD budget in FY2014 was \$69,158,042. CCPD-funded programs are organized into five funding categories, aligning programs with similar missions into comparable groups. The five key funding areas include Enhanced Enforcement, Neighborhood Crime Prevention, Partners with a Shared Mission, Recruitment and Training, and Equipment, Technology, and Infrastructure.

On May 10, 2014, Fort Worth voters approved a five-year renewal of the CCPD, ensuring critical crime prevention programs are funded through FY2020.

## FY2014 CCPD Funding Allocation

Total Budget = \$69,158,042



Enhanced Enforcement	Neighborhood Crime Prevention	Partners with a Shared Mission	Recruitment and Training	Equipment, Technology, and Infrastructure
\$16,675,064	\$10,919,184	\$4,432,484	\$4,262,117	\$32,869,193

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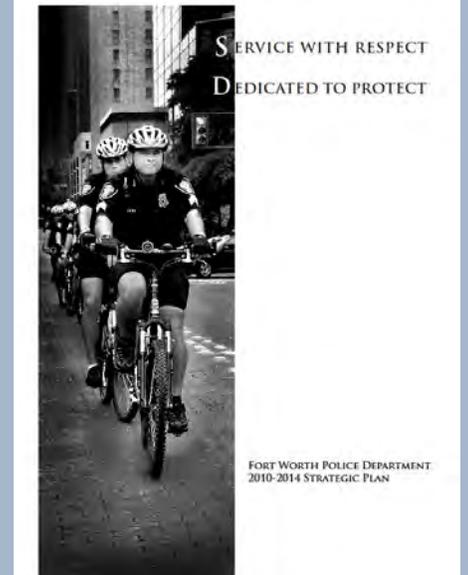
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# 2010-2014 Five-Year Strategic Plan: Implementation Summary

2014 marked the fifth year of the Fort Worth Police Department's 2010-2014 Strategic Plan, which has served as an implementation guide for the department's primary initiatives. Below are a few highlights of significant strategic plan accomplishments:



## Initiative #1—Partnerships and Community Relations

- Partnered with the Safe City Commission to assist with the establishment of One Safe Place, a family justice center providing comprehensive, integrated services to victims of domestic violence.
- Established a Chief's Community Advisory Committee to provide information about departmental initiatives, procedures and hot topics and/or concerns to a diverse group of community leaders.
- Initiated the Code Blue at the Schools program to increase volunteer patrols along the perimeter of elementary schools—a community policing partnership with FWISD.
- Created a Public Relations Office to improve communication to officers, the public and the media.
- Launched social media platforms to increase communication capabilities with the public.

## Initiative #2—Public Awareness: Crime Prevention and Public Safety

- Crime Prevention Specialists continue to provide crime prevention and personal safety techniques at neighborhood meetings, crime prevention fairs and community forums.
- Created the ability to file traffic accident reports online to increase safety and increase efficiencies

## Initiative #3—Crime Control and Prevention District (CCPD)

- District renewed by voters in 2014 for another five year cycle beginning in 2016
- Began annual public input meetings, surveys and ongoing outreach to seek public input on the annual CCPD budget process

## Initiative #4—Intelligence Led Policing: Tactical, Planning and Analysis Strategies

- Reorganization from five bureaus to a three bureau structure (Patrol, Support & Finance/Personnel) enabled the department to create a Tactical Command to enhance it's capacity to implement Intelligence Led Policing
- Developed and implemented a series of crime suppression plans using a comprehensive approach utilizing intelligence led policing tactics, community policing and crime prevention through environmental design strategies.
- Dedicated an officer to focus and assist with the homeless population in coordination with Directions Home and increased transparency through regular data reporting.
- Implemented Crime Free Multi-Housing Program

## Initiative #5—Recruitment and Training

- Researched best practices and implemented new recruitment methods to promote a diverse and professional workforce
- Created an Ethics and Multicultural Committee to enhance training of all employees

**Initiative #6—Internal Operations / Systems/ Staffing**

- Researched staffing models, conducted staffing analysis and in 2014 retained the Police Executive Research Forum to conduct a comprehensive staffing study, evaluated and made recommendations for both sworn and civilian personnel.
- Became accredited to provide DNA analysis, increasing investigative capabilities through more timely evidence processing
- Created the Emergency Preparedness Incident Command (EPIC) to enhance ability to address both planned and unplanned events/incidents.

**Initiative #7—Financial Planning and Management**

- Formed a Budget Committee to review, rank and prioritize chain approved funding requests—enabling the department to identify both short-term needs, as well as plan up to twenty years into the future.
- Created an electronic needs assessment management system to collect all funding requests that are electronically routed through the chain of command for approval, then reviewed, ranked and prioritized by the Police Department’s Technology Committee and Budget Committee prior to Executive Command staff’s final approval.. This tool is critical to the Department’s ability to filter and prioritize the Department’s most critical needs in preparation for the upcoming fiscal year and financially planning for future needs.

**Initiative #8—Technology**

- Formed a Technology Committee to provide the Police Department support and guidance through proactive planning, research and the implementation of strategic plan technology related initiatives.
- Launched new website design to increase transparency with the public.
- Developed a Executive Dashboard to enable more effective and efficient strategy execution, improved business processes, and proactive management of business metrics.
- Began utilizing body camera technology.
- Implemented a series of technology advancements including the launching of a new electronic accident reporting system known as Report Beam, a new website design, learning management system, laserfiche, and a new training software for Communications Division. Replaced mobile data computers, upgraded interview room equipment, expanded the in-car video system, and began utilizing electronic ticket writers, and implemented a series of improvements to the Record Management System.

**Initiative #9—Facility Planning and Management**

- Developed a Police Facility Resource Book and a 2035 Police Facility Plan.
- Made progress towards and/or completed several police facility projects as of end of 2014.

Planning	Design and/or Construction Underway	2010-2014 Completed Projects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6<sup>th</sup> Division Facility</li> <li>• Replacement of a series of leased and city owned facilities, of which may not be available in the future</li> <li>• Commercial Auto Theft office and Bait Car Program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Police Heliport</li> <li>• Public Safety Complex <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PD/FD Training</li> <li>• PD/FD Administration</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Tactical Command Center</li> <li>• West Division Joyce Facility</li> <li>• Crime Scene &amp; Property Room Expansion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crime Lab and Property Room Facility</li> <li>• North Patrol Division, Main Facility</li> <li>• Central Division Hemphill Facility</li> <li>• Polytechnic Heights Neighborhood Center</li> <li>• East Lancaster Storefront</li> <li>• Mounted Patrol Equestrian Facility</li> <li>• Public Safety Complex</li> <li>• Weapons Range</li> </ul>

## 2014 Facility Projects

Several police facilities opened in 2014 that support FWPD's policing philosophies. These following new facilities opened in 2014:

- **Tactical Center**—FWPD tactical and analytical functions critical to the department's operational efficiency.
- **Indoor Weapons Range**—The new range at the Public Safety Complex south of downtown Fort Worth offers four ranges of varying sizes allowing officers to train using a variety of weapons, including one 100-yard range, one 50-yard range, and two 25-yard ranges. The state-of-the-art facility includes 85 lanes of training capacity and is one of the largest indoor facilities in the nation. Training space is available for both in-service and recruit training as well as other agencies' law enforcement officers.



25-yard indoor weapons range located at new Public Safety Complex

- **Mounted Patrol Equestrian Facility**—The new facility on the west side of Fort Worth replaces an outdated and outgrown facility in the Stockyards. Funded by a citizen support group, the facility is located on approximately ten acres and contains an administration building, a large barn with stalls and attached runs to accommodate up to 24 horses, indoor and outdoor training areas, and equipment and supplies storage areas.



FWPD Mounted Patrol Equestrian Facility

- **One Safe Place**—This Safe City Commission facility provides interdisciplinary and streamlined services for victims of domestic and/or family violence. FWPD Victims Assistance Unit and Special Victims Section are located at One Safe Place. The facility serves as a centralized location for victims to report a crime; receive medical, legal, and counseling services; and, have access to on-site professionals such as child protective service workers and victim advocate specialists to aid in specific crises.

The planning, design, and/or construction for other essential facilities also commenced or continued in 2014. Design continued to renovate acquired property adjacent to an existing West Division Patrol facility. When complete, this will consolidate West Division operations and create efficiencies. Additionally, the groundbreaking of a new hanger and administration building for Air Support at the Meacham International Airport occurred in April 2014; construction is anticipated to be complete in late 2015.



Dignitaries participate in groundbreaking ceremony for new Air Support hangar at Meacham International Airport

# The Next Five-Year Strategic Plan Update—2015-2019

Fort Worth Police Department staff developed a 2010-2014 implementation summary, which concluded that of the 252 total action items listed in the plan, 208 (82.5 percent) action items have been completed and an additional 26 (10.3 percent) action items are listed as partially-completed or ongoing action items, marking successful implementation for the five-year (2010 - 2014) strategic planning period. This paved the way for the next five-year strategic planning process.



In the fall of 2015, staff then began developing a new five-year strategic plan to identify departmental priorities for operational efficiency and service quality from 2015-2019. A Strategic Plan Task Force that includes FWPD sworn and civilian personnel as well as community members was created to prioritize initiatives and strategies to support the department's vision to become the safest large city in the nation. The task force identified the following four focus areas as the highest-priority issues to address: Communication, Community Relations,

Personnel Development, and Technology and Equipment. (Police Facilities Plan is a component of the overall strategic plan.) This effort was placed on hold in order to enable the incoming Chief of Police an opportunity to provide input into the process, and is anticipated to continue in late 2015.

## Police Executive Research Forum Staffing Study

A staffing study for the Fort Worth Police Department (FWPD) was completed in October 2014 by the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF). PERF is a leading research agency founded in 1976 and comprised of former officers. PERF is an independent research organization focused on critical issues in policing. They provide management services, technical assistance, and executive-level education to support law enforcement agencies.



The staffing study provides recommendations regarding optimal patrol, investigative, and support staffing levels. Analysis for this report looked at both current and future staffing needs. PERF conducted several on-site visits and conducted interviews with sworn and civilian personnel from nearly all components of the department. PERF representatives stated that department staff were found to be professional, knowledgeable, and dedicated to the department's mission. The staffing study examined the multifarious aspects of the organization and its needs as it moves forward. The study identified many of the department's challenges and strengths, providing recommendations to best serve the needs of the citizens of Fort Worth. The study provides guidance as the organization works to meet staffing challenges while still providing quality police service.

Some of the study's recommendations have already been implemented or are in the process of being implemented. Other recommendations may require additional research and evaluation by the department to determine if they can be accomplished. The staffing study is a proactive measure to ensure the department maintains its service-oriented philosophies in a growing and changing environment. The study will be incorporated into the 2015-2019 Five-Year Strategic Plan for the Police Department.

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## FWPD Awarded COPS Hiring Grant



In September 2014, FWPD was awarded the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Hiring Program grant, designed to advance public safety through community policing by addressing full-time sworn officer needs of law

enforcement agencies nationwide. The federal grant program provides funds directly to law enforcement agencies to hire new and/or rehire veteran law enforcement officers to increase the agencies' community policing capacities and crime prevention efforts. FWPD was awarded \$1.9 million from the COPS Office for the three year program which provides a total of fifteen new officer positions. Required grant matching funds in the amount of \$1.5 million was provided through the Crime Control and Prevention District.

Through the grant program, five officer positions will be created to staff a Real Time Crime Center (RTCC), which will assist police officers by providing real-time reports, information, support, tips, leads, and monitoring, thereby delivering a proactive approach to law enforcement in developing and dynamic situations. The RTCC will also perform supplemental investigative work, providing data-mining support to detectives in complex cases, especially cold cases where additional in-depth research may find clues not available by other means. Ultimately, the RTCC will engage in information-sharing with potential regional partners and neighboring agencies to provide cross-jurisdictional support.

Ten additional grant-funded positions will support the creation of a sixth Zero Tolerance (ZT) team. The ZT Section, in the Tactical Operations Division, currently consists of five teams, each containing eight officers, one detective/corporal, and one sergeant. ZT Section personnel effectively and efficiently act as crime suppression officers. In dynamic situations and special events, ZT teams will work closely with the RTCC, creating increased intelligence capacity and information-sharing, flowing from the RTCC centralized hub to the field and back.

## FWPD Hosts Citizens Crime Prevention Academy

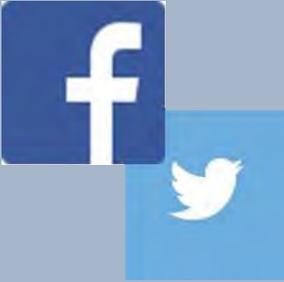
The Crime Prevention Unit presented a Citizens Crime Prevention Academy in the month of June in an effort to better educate community leaders and citizens on how to reduce their chance of becoming a victim of crime. Some of the training topics included identity theft, home security, personal safety, and homeland security.



The training provided through the academy will help encourage citizens and neighbors to assist the department in making Fort Worth safe by preventing opportunities for crime to occur.

# Social Media Expansion

Contacts on FWPD social media sites, including Twitter and Facebook, increased significantly in 2014.



The FWPD Public Relations Office (PRO) uses social media to communicate and respond to residents. With the growing number of social media followers, the PRO needed help responding to the numerous messages it receives through FWPD's social media sites. The PRO signed up for Social Media Capture (SMC4), a free social media monitoring tool, which sends the entire PRO team automated alerts to messages (i.e., threats, compliments, profanity, negative comments) received on its social media sites. The software allows the PRO to respond quickly and stay

vigilant of all communications the department receives. SMC4 has proven itself a successful tool in the department's continued communication with residents and social media followers.

## Detail Created to Address Homeless Population Needs

In November, a new Central Division detail was created to address the needs of the homeless population in the East Lancaster Avenue area.

The goals of the Homeless Outreach Program and Enforcement (HOPE) detail are to reduce homeless-related calls for service, provide better assistance to the homeless, and to improve the safety and quality of life in the community. The HOPE detail consists of seven officers: a lieutenant, sergeant, detective, neighborhood patrol officer, homeless liaison officer, and two neighborhood resource officers. The HOPE team will engage with local homeless agencies and partners in an effort to create long-term solutions for the city's homeless citizens and to provide them enhanced access to police services.



After only one month of increased community involvement and outreach, enforcement, and a greater presence throughout the area, the HOPE detail has experienced a reduction in both crime and calls for service in the area around the city's homeless shelters. In addition to these efforts, the homeless liaison officer, along with area agencies, supplied dinner at local restaurants and held a Christmas party for children at several shelters.

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## Crime Lab Granted Access to CODIS Database



FWPD's Crime Lab was granted access to the Combined DNA Index System (CODIS) in December. CODIS is a national database of DNA records that is used to search crime scene samples against convicted offenders and evidence from other crimes to provide investigative leads. Of the first nine DNA profiles entered into the CODIS system, the Crime Lab obtained two hits on a burglary case and one hit on a robbery case.

## Project Safe Neighborhood Initiative Targets Gun Violence

FWPD partnered with the Safe City Commission, federal law enforcement agencies, and local non-profit organizations to bring the Project Safe Neighborhood (PSN) program to Fort Worth. The program is designed to create safer neighborhoods and to reduce gun and gang violence by employing research-driven, intelligence-led, and problem-solving techniques. The initiative is funded through the Department of Justice Violent Gang and Gun Crime Reduction Program competitive grant. Fort Worth Police Department received a total grant award of \$137,861 for enforcement overtime, training, equipment, and software.

In 2014, PSN was implemented in communities in south and east Fort Worth with high crime and concentration of violent criminal offenders. The PSN multi-disciplinary partnership is known as the Criminal Incident Response Team (CIRT) and utilizes the following five PSN design features to address crime in the targeted areas: partnership, strategic planning, training, outreach, and accountability. To more effectively address the needs of the targeted communities, CIRT organized four subcommittees to create specific strategies in an effort to implement a successful PSN campaign:

- **Enforcement:** law enforcement agencies collect and share intelligence information and research. Other efforts include police patrols and targeting repeat violent offenders in the targeted areas.
- **Media:** the "Not on My Block" campaign was created to share information regarding gun laws and related prosecutions. Campaigns includes billboards, bus benches, and community outreach programs.
- **Re-entry:** offenders reentering the community are given information and resources to assimilate into a life without crime. Monthly presentations are given to parolees and probationers regarding gun laws and related prosecutions.
- **Prevention:** resources, intervention programs, and community support are provided to youth in order to prevent their commission of criminal offenses



# TRAC Unit Created

The Tactical Response to Apartment Crime (TRAC) Unit was created to combat crime in and around apartment communities. The TRAC Unit works closely with Neighborhood Patrol Officers (NPOs) assigned to specific geographic areas. TRAC responds to Priority 1 and 2 calls for service, develops key contacts, and gathers criminal intelligence to identify and address key problems. A few accomplishments include:

- Working with the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission (TABC) to suspend alcohol licenses for convenience stores that are used as hubs for criminal activity
- Conducting saturation patrols, both in vehicles and on foot
- Identifying suspects in major case incidents, including homicides, throughout the area
- Making arrests for a variety of crimes including auto-theft, possession of illegal weapons and drugs, felony warrants, and burglarizing motor vehicles

## Fort Worth Police Department Leads the Way in Body Camera Technology

The Fort Worth Police Department purchased its first 50 body cameras in 2012, followed by another set of 145 devices in 2013—the majority deployed in patrol and the traffic division, with a few in zero tolerance, gang and SWAT units. Since December 2013, every graduating recruit is trained to use a camera and assigned one.

In 2014, the City entered into a \$2.7M agreement to purchase 400 more devices with five years of evidence storage. This purchase enabled the department to equip a total of 595 officers with body camera technology—making the police department the second-largest user of this type of cameras in the country in 2014. Chief Robertson stated that with President Obama’s call to equip seven percent of the nation’s police force with body cameras, other departments are now asking the Fort Worth Police Department for advice.

The videos are uploaded to Evidence.com, where detectives and supervisors can view them as evidence in criminal prosecutions, or while investigating administrative concerns or a citizen’s complaint about an officer’s behavior. The cameras attach to the officer’s glasses or collar.



Department policy states that officers should activate their cameras when collecting evidence that can be used in criminal prosecutions, to record contacts with the public in which law enforcement action will potentially be taken, in foot and vehicle pursuits and in the execution of consensual searches. The cameras should also be activated when investigating calls involving mentally distressed persons, documenting accident or crime scenes, and by at least one officer during tactical entries, such as when a SWAT team storms a house. Videos categorized as criminal or administrative will be kept for a minimum of two years, under department policy. Videos not categorized will be destroyed after 180 days.

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