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Police Departments around the United States do not have exactly the same challenges that other nations may face with Second Tier Policing; however our agencies do use many resources that are meant to assist and supplement traditional policing methods, although they are not without their own problems and detractors. Larger cities such as New York and Los Angeles make use of auxiliary policing groups made up largely of volunteers who undergo special training and assist sworn officers with neighborhood patrols, minor incidents, and general crime deterrence. Further, some departments have implemented programs that allow young people start off as “Public Safety Aids” as a way of both supplementing local law enforcement and as a first step toward entering the police academy to become sworn officers themselves. Still others use Neighborhood Watch and other community programs to increase awareness and deter crime in our neighborhoods.

While many of these programs may have altruistic goals, they cause a variety of problems. Civilianization of duties previously performed by sworn officers can cause potentially dangerous situations due to a lack of training and experience on the part of the civilian employee or volunteer, particularly in a

patrol situation. While proponents of civilianization point to the cost savings for the department and claim that use of these employees and volunteers frees up sworn officers to serve where they are most needed, there is the danger that agencies will use these cost savings to fill fewer and fewer positions with sworn officers in favor of cheaper (and less experienced) labor.

Another commonly-implemented program is Community Policing, which has been implemented to varying degrees of success in many communities across the nation. This program, funded in large part by the 1994 Crime Bill and the 21st Century Policing Initiative, is thought to have been responsible for adding a large number of Law Enforcement Officers to our neighborhood streets and reducing crime in high-risk areas. The United States Department of Justice's Office of Community Policing Services defines Community Policing as "a policing philosophy that promotes and supports organizational strategies to address the causes and reduce the fear of crime and social disorder through problem-solving tactics and police-community partnerships."¹ While the program is not without its problems, it is thought by its advocates to be an effective tool against criminal activity.

Community Policing has become a widespread theory of crime prevention, and many Police Departments have adopted Community Policing into the mission statements of their organizations. One of the reasons for the relative success of some of these programs is that the Community Officer is often given enough autonomy to make decisions and solve problems as befits their role in

¹ United States Department of Justice. (April 8, 2003). Office of Community Policing Services . In *What is Community Policing?*. Retrieved August 28, 2006, from <http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/default.asp?Item=36>.

the community. This requires a high level of leadership, and along with it accountability, that is thought to provide extra motivation for the officers as well as the community to make a success of the program.²

The specific operations of Community Policing vary from one jurisdiction to the next, dependant upon the needs of the community and the dictates of the participating Police Department. A typical model might include one or more sworn Law Enforcement Officers, who would be eligible for union representation under the same guidelines as any other officer in their jurisdiction, that are dedicated to a particular community. The Officers are meant to work within the community to build trust and strengthen the relationship between Law Enforcement and the members of the community. They work together to identify and address problems and areas of concern within the district and create a network of citizens and community organizations committed to reducing crime in their neighborhoods. These citizens work with the Officers to improve the neighborhood and make it less conducive to criminal activity. Beyond simply reacting to crime within our neighborhoods, Community Policing seeks to deal with crime through proactive measures aimed at preventing criminal activity and making our neighborhoods safer places to live. For example, the Officer, rather than allowing an abandoned building to become a haven for vandals and drug users, would work with the community to help them find a productive use for the building or find a way to have the building razed and have the property itself put

² United States Department of Justice. (April 8, 2006). Office of Community Policing Services . In *Organizational Elements*. Retrieved 08/28/2006, from <http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/default.asp?Item=477>.

to other uses rather than allowing a problem to develop.³ Community Policing seeks to engage the citizenry and community groups in a partnership with law enforcement to clean up trouble spots in the neighborhood that are prone to foster crime, address potential problems within the community before they grow into bigger issues, and establish a rapport that will lead to more reliable reporting of existing criminal activity.

The Community Police Officer may patrol the neighborhood in a car, on a motorcycle or bicycle, on horseback, or on foot depending on the needs of the community. The officer is typically in uniform, and the established presence of a known and respected Law Enforcement Officer is often an effective deterrent to crime in and of itself. The Officer's presence can also serve to relieve the members of the community of the feelings of helplessness and anxiety that can develop in a neighborhood with a serious crime problem. Supporters of Community Policing believe that its implementation can allow our citizens to reclaim their streets from the criminal element and raise the quality of life in our communities.⁴

Community Policing is not without its detractors, however. Concerns have been expressed that this program has been implemented without adequate planning, with communities added to the program in steps as funding permits and the public requires. Critics argue that this form of policing is not cost effective due to its labor-intensive nature and often has to be scaled back or aborted due

³ United States Department of Justice. (March 1999). The Clinton Administration's Law Enforcement Strategy: Combating Crime with Community Policing and Community Prosecution. In *Taking Back Our Neighborhoods One Block at a Time*. Retrieved August 29, 2006, from <http://www.usdoj.gov/archive/dag/pubdoc/crimestrategy.pdf>.

⁴ United States Department of Justice. (March 1999). The Clinton Administration's Law Enforcement Strategy: Combating Crime with Community Policing and Community Prosecution. In *Taking Back Our Neighborhoods One Block at a Time*. Retrieved August 29, 2006, from <http://www.usdoj.gov/archive/dag/pubdoc/crimestrategy.pdf>.

to budgetary shortfalls.⁵ Beyond the concern that this program can create alienation in neighborhoods that have not been incorporated into the Community Policing program, there is also a serious issue with other Law Enforcement Officers who may feel that Community Officers are held to a different standard than other Officers and are allowed to play by different rules. This can create a barrier of communication within the police force that can be detrimental to the Police Department as well as public safety.⁶

Community Policing currently has a number of issues that need to be worked out before it can truly be effective, however it has enjoyed some successes on the local level. If the inherent problems can be overcome there is some potential for success in a well-planned and well-funded Community Policing program.

⁵ Patterson, J. (November 1995). The 'Lectric Law Library. In *Community Policing: Learning The Lessons Of History*. Retrieved August 29, 2006, from <http://www.lectlaw.com/files/cjs07.htm>.

⁶ M. Embry, personal communication, August 29, 2006.