

City Club of Portland  
Presents Its Report :

# Community Policing in Portland



*“Community policing is in a shifting, uneasy stage of evolution. Its general principles are accepted as desirable goals, but the strategies to achieve them are hotly debated.”*

--Urban Institute, 1999

City Club membership will vote on this report on Friday, May 9, 2003. Until the membership vote, City Club of Portland does not have an official position on this report. The outcome of this vote will be reported in the City Club Bulletin dated May 23, 2003.



**The City Club of Portland Mission**

To inform its members and the community in public matters and to arouse in them a realization of the obligations of citizenship.

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City Club welcomes your comments. Please send written comments to [info@pdxcityclub.org](mailto:info@pdxcityclub.org).

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## COMMUNITY POLICING IN PORTLAND

### Executive Summary

Community policing is a philosophy and practice that has gained wide acceptance in many cities across the United States. Escalating crime rates in the 1980s increased public frustration with police practices and bolstered public support for alternative approaches to traditional law enforcement. Community policing is the outcome of this social movement in Portland and many other cities. While community policing is implemented in varied ways, all community policing embodies the fundamental concepts of **problem solving**, i.e., looking beyond arrest to the underlying causes of crime, and **partnership**, i.e., sharing responsibility for public safety and neighborhood livability between the community and the police.

Community policing is distinctly different from traditional policing and requires organizational development and active reinforcement of its philosophy to sustain a problem-solving and partnership approach to public safety. This sustained effort is the most difficult aspect of successfully implementing community policing in all cities, including Portland. The tension between the principles of problem solving and partnership and the more traditional approaches of law enforcement is constant, and recent concerns about homeland security have increased this tension.

Portland Mayor Bud Clark and the City Council passed two resolutions introducing community policing to Portland in 1989. Chief of Police Tom Potter translated the philosophy of community policing into action. Potter instituted numerous committees and working groups of community members and Portland Police Bureau staff to guide the implementation of community policing. Potter also established an internal vocabulary and set of personnel practices that brought about a cultural shift within the Police Bureau that led to the acceptance of community policing as the new standard for policing in Portland. Each successive chief since Potter has been charged with continuing the advancement of community policing in Portland.

On the community side, the Office of Neighborhood Involvement, which includes the Crime Prevention Center and neighborhood associations, is the city bureau that works most closely with the Portland Police Bureau. Other city bureaus also partner with the police on specific issues, e.g., the Bureau of Buildings is a critical player in efforts to shut down drug houses. Local non-profit organizations and businesses, such as Central City Concern, which operates the Hooper Detoxification Center, and Central Eastside Industrial Council, are also important parts of the community policing

network. In addition, the county judicial system provides invaluable support to community policing through the Neighborhood District Attorney and Community Court programs.

The arrival of Chief Mark Kroeker in 1999 began a period of intense public scrutiny of policing in Portland. Some of this attention was stimulated by controversy surrounding some of Chief Kroeker's decisions and directives. This environment set the stage for a critical look at the state of community policing in Portland and to the decision of the City Club of Portland to undertake this study. While the controversy surrounding Chief Kroeker has raised questions about the city's commitment to community policing, your committee was asked to evaluate community policing in general, not Chief Kroeker's performance specifically.

In particular, your committee was charged with a number of questions about whether community policing has lived up to its promise. Has the vision of community policing been broadly understood and accepted? Has it been fully implemented in the community and within the Police Bureau? What impact has community policing had on public safety and the perception of safety by community members? Have evaluation efforts been meaningful? How does community policing in Portland compare to other American cities? Finally, is community policing in Portland worth a renewed commitment from city officials, community members and the police bureau?

Your committee looked to a number of sources to answer these questions. We reviewed extensive background materials and conducted numerous interviews with elected officials, community members and personnel from every level of the police bureau.

*Your committee drew the following conclusions:*

- ◆ Since 1990 when community policing was introduced in Portland, crime has decreased significantly and the public's perception of safety has increased markedly. The majority of citizens are satisfied with the performance of the Portland Police Bureau.
- ◆ The citizens of Portland consider community policing the accepted standard for policing. The community expects--even demands--community policing.
- ◆ Mechanisms for community input and particularly for shared decision making are weak in spite of Portland's strong tradition of neighborhood involvement.
- ◆ Some members of the community and the Portland Police Bureau believe that Chief Kroeker does not fully support community policing. The perception that community policing is "off the radar screen" is a serious concern.
- ◆ Within the Portland Police Bureau, organizational development and personnel practices that support community policing are weak

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### Executive Summary

and may be further weakened by budget cuts. Minority recruiting efforts are ineffective, the absence of employee performance evaluations and incentives to adopt community policing practices hinder progress, and training specific to community policing is inadequate.

- ◆ Leadership for community policing is a serious problem within the City Council and the Portland Police Bureau. Community policing is rarely discussed by the City Council, and usually in response to a crisis. An aloof style of communication and a focus on results to the detriment of process have weakened Chief Kroeker's effectiveness as a leader and as an advocate for community policing. The leadership provided by Chief Kroeker or any future chief is key to establishing community policing as the model of policing for Portland.
- ◆ The infrastructure, budgetary support, planning and evaluation needed on the community side to complement and support the community policing practices within the Portland Police Bureau are seriously deficient. These problems began with the 1989 City Council resolution that directed all its expectations to the Portland Police Bureau and neglected other parts of city government that affect the community.

*Based on these conclusions, your committee developed an extensive list of recommendations. Among these are the following:*

- ◆ The mayor and other city commissioners should show their unequivocal and visible support for community policing and should ensure that all city bureaus are fully committed. Budgetary impacts on community policing should be monitored closely.
- ◆ The police chief should be a visible advocate for community policing and should use face-to-face communication to build relationships inside the Police Bureau and in the community.
- ◆ The original vision, i.e., the 1989 and 1990 City Council resolutions, and subsequent strategic planning for community policing should be revised to encompass the crime prevention expectations incumbent upon the community. The Portland Police Bureau and appropriate structures within the community must share accountability.
- ◆ Personnel practices within the Portland Police Bureau should be revised to support community policing. Improvement in recruiting minority officers is especially important and should be emphasized.
- ◆ Outside evaluations of community policing should be conducted regularly. Measures that are currently weak, namely evaluations of partnerships, leadership and community activities that support community policing should be strengthened.

COMMUNITY POLICING IN PORTLAND  
**Your Committee**

Respectfully submitted,

David Abravanel  
Ruby Apsler  
Jim Gorter  
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Richard Meyer  
Julie Sterling  
Kristin Angell, chief writer  
Meredith Savery, chair

Pauline Anderson, research advisor  
Gil Johnson, research advisor

Wade Fickler, research director

## APPENDICES

### A. INTERVIEWS

**Katherine Anderson**, Crime Prevention Specialist, Office of Neighborhood Involvement

**Amy Banta**, Deputy, Corrections Department, Multnomah Sheriff's Office;  
volunteer, Crisis Response Team

**Ed Blackburn**, Director, Chemical Dependency Unit, Central City Concern

**Gary Blackmer**, City Auditor, City of Portland

**Jane Braaten**, Manager, Planning and Support Division, Portland Police Bureau

**Richard Brown**, Member, Chief's Advisory Forum

**Victoria Burton**, Officer, Crisis Response Team, Portland Police Bureau

**Don Clark**, former Multnomah County Sheriff, former Chair, Multnomah County Board  
of Commissioners; former Executive Director, Housing Authority of Portland

**Greg Clark**, Assistant Chief of Operations, Portland Police Bureau (retired December  
2002)

**Kenneth Edwards**, Crime Prevention Specialist, Office of Neighborhood Involvement

**Joanne Ferrero**, President, Central Eastside Industrial Council

**Derrick Foxworth**, Assistant Chief, Portland Police Bureau

**Jim Francesconi**, Commissioner, Portland City Council

**Charlie Hales**, former Commissioner, Portland City Council

**Jim Hayden**, Neighborhood District Attorney, Multnomah County

**Donna Henderson**, Captain, head of Personnel, Portland Police Bureau  
(transferred to another position, February 2003)

**Art Hendricks**, Manager, Crime Prevention Center, Office of Neighborhood  
Involvement

**Vera Katz**, Mayor, City of Portland

**Robert King**, Detective, Portland Police Bureau; President, Portland Police Association

**Mark Kroeker**, Chief of Police, Portland Police Bureau

**Julie Larson**, Director, Project Respond

**Bob MacKay**, Research Associate, Portland-Multnomah Progress Board

**Ray Mathis**, Executive Director, Citizens Crime Commission (retired summer 2002)

**Ed May**, retired Commander, Central Division, Portland Police Bureau

**Kimberly McClain**, Chair, Montavilla Neighborhood Association

**Scott Marcy**, Finance Officer, Multnomah County Community District Attorney  
Program

**Marsha Palmer**, Supervisor, Community Support Unit, Planning and Support Division,  
Portland Police Bureau

**Wayne Pearson**, Senior Deputy District Attorney, Multnomah County

**Susan Pearce**, Chair, Hosford-Abernathy Neighborhood Development Association

**Tom Potter**, former Chief of Police, Portland Police Bureau

**Brian Renauer**, Professor, Administration of Justice, Portland State University

**Dan Saltzman**, Commissioner, Portland City Council

**Darrel Schenck**, Captain, head of Internal Affairs Division, Portland Police Bureau

**Mark Sponhauer**, Officer, Portland Police Bureau Training Division

**Erik Sten**, Commissioner, Portland City Council

**Susan Teruya**, Block Watch Captain, Outer Southeast Portland

**Jack Wigmore**, Coordinator, Referral Reception Center, New Avenues for Youth (no  
longer employed by New Avenues for Youth)

## COMMUNITY POLICING IN PORTLAND

### Appendices

#### B. POLICE RIDE-ALONGS

**Larry Anderson**, Patrol Officer, Northeast Precinct, Portland Police Bureau  
**Steve Andrusko**, Senior Neighborhood Officer, Central Precinct, Portland Police Bureau  
**Cliff Bacigalupi**, Senior Neighborhood Officer, North Precinct, Portland Police Bureau  
**Randy Brandt**, Senior Neighborhood Officer, East Precinct, Portland Police Bureau  
(transferred summer 02)  
**Jeff Myers**, Patrol Officer, Central Precinct, Portland Police Bureau (currently Senior  
Neighborhood Officer, Central Precinct)

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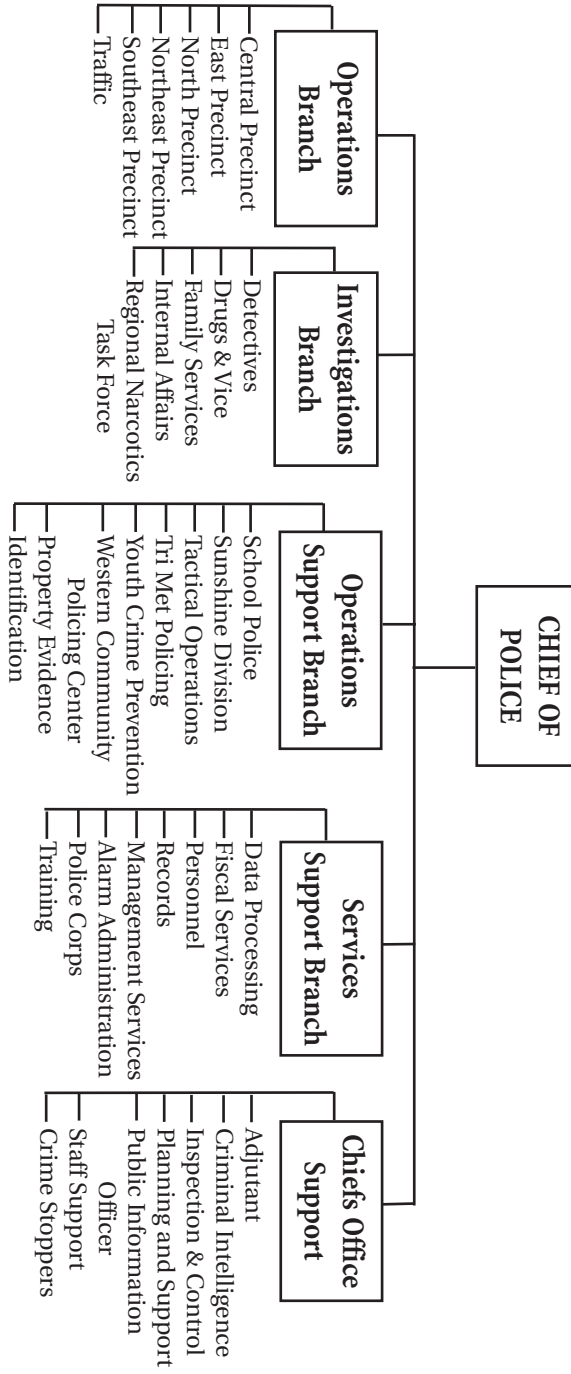
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## Appendices

### D. PORTLAND POLICE BUREAU ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



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