COMMUNITY POLICING
Town of China, Maine

Whereas the Town of China desires in law enforcement to embrace the community policing or community oriented policing model; one promoting 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, the China Select Board consequently wishes to adopt the following as guiding definitions and philosophy for the policing services in the town of China.

Community Policing or Community Oriented Policing: The system of allocating police officers to particular areas so that they become familiar with the local inhabitants. It is a strategy of policing that focuses on proactive enforcement; developing community partnerships, engaging in problem solving, and implementing community policing organizational features. The Town of China has one part-time police position. Can one officer really transform a community? Under the community policing model, where officers are empowered to identify and solve problem proactively, the answer is certainly yes. The town believes that crime fighting is more proactive than reactive. The town's part-time police position is able to become familiar with the local inhabitants over time.

Community Partnerships: Community policing encourages interactive partnerships between law enforcement agencies, their officers, and the people they serve. By leveraging connections within the community, police are better positioned to solve public safety problems. Immediately below are some examples of opportunities for community partnerships, not particular to any municipality.

Other Government Agencies

Potential Partners: Probation and parole, health and human services, child support services, schools, and other neighboring law enforcement agencies.

Examples of Partnerships: Providing educational programs with local libraries or school systems that incorporate law enforcement personnel.

Community Members and Groups

Potential Partners: Individuals who live and work in the community.

Examples of Partnerships: Encouraging people to attend Neighborhood Watch meetings or citizen police academies where they will learn more about the department and keeping the community safe.

Nonprofits and Service Providers

Potential Partners: Support groups, service clubs, issue and advocacy organizations, community development corporations, and faith-based community.

Examples of Partnerships: Meeting with specific groups such as churches to hear what they have to say and providing crime prevention and other resources targeted to that audience's needs.

Private Businesses

Potential Partners: Small business community, large corporations, and local chamber of commerce and visitors' bureaus.

Examples of Partnerships: Shop with a cop programs during the holidays (this could be a multi-way collaboration between the business community and nonprofits and service providers).

Media

Potential Partners: Newspapers, television outlets, radio stations, and bloggers.

Ways to Partner: Collaborating on message dissemination.

PROBLEM SOLVING

Community policing emphasizes proactive problem solving in a routine fashion, encouraging officers to develop solutions to the immediate, underlying public safety problems. Problem solving must be incorporated into all police operations and guide decision-making efforts.

Scanning

Scanning is used to identify a basic problem, determine the nature of the problem, determine the severity of the problem, and establish baseline measures. Problems can be a type of behavior, place, person(s), special event, or a combination of any of these factors. With input from the community, police should identify and prioritize concerns and issues.

Analysis

Analysis is the heart of the problem-solving process. The objectives are to develop understanding of the problem, its likely causes, and possible effects or outcomes. It is important to find out as much as possible about each aspect of the crime triangle by asking who, what, where, how, why, and why not about the victim, offender, and crime location.

Response

The response phase involves developing and implementing strategies to address an identified problem. The response should follow logically from what was learned in the analysis phase. The goals of response can range from totally eliminating the problem, substantially reducing the problem, reducing the amount of harm caused by the problem, to improving the quality of community cohesion.

Assessment

Assessment determines if the response strategies were successful by assessing if the problem declined and if the response contributed to the decline. This information assists the current effort and also gathers data that build knowledge for the future.

Using the crime triangle to focus on immediate conditions

It is often helpful to visual the links among the victim, offender, and location. These links are known as the crime triangle. Rather than focusing solely on the root causes of a problem, the crime triangle allows law enforcement to focus on factors that are within their scope to address. This includes such factors as limiting criminal access to victims, increasing guardianship, and associating risk with unwanted behavior.

ORGANIZATIONAL FEATURES

The community policing philosophy is reflected in how departments are organized and managed, and also how the infrastructure of the department supports community policing efforts.

Agency Management

Community policing asks law enforcement executives to incorporate community policing ideals into all areas of an agency. Areas include climate and culture, leadership, labor relations, decision-making, strategic planning, policies and procedures, organizational evaluations, and transparency.

Organizational Structure

The organizational structure of a community policing-focused agency ensures that patrol officers have decision-making authority and are held accountable for their actions. Agencies can achieve this structure by allocating resources to problem-solving efforts and partnerships. Many agencies also shift toward long-term assignments for officers and the development of generalists who are able to handle multiple responsibilities and work as a team.

Personnel

In a community policing-focused department, the ideals of community policing are incorporated throughout an entire agency. To do this, community policing is integrated into all parts of the personnel process including recruitment, hiring, and selection, as well as personnel evaluations, supervision, and training. This places a focus on service, creative thinking, proactive communication, and other skills through all levels of staff within an agency.

Information Systems and Technology

Advanced technology and sophisticated information systems play a central role in helping to provide access to accurate community information. Accurate information makes community policing efforts more effective and ensures that officers are informed about their area's specific needs and conditions. Technology can also assist with improving two-way communication between citizens and police.

Skills and Abilities

Community policing is an important aspect of a law enforcement career. Many agencies today hire in the spirit of service, not in the spirit of adventure. In other words, agencies are looking for individuals who are drawn to and exhibit characteristics in line with the service element of policing over the prospect of excitement and adventure. And rightly so -- analysis of calls for service shows the vast majority of calls to which officers respond are not crime related.

A U.S. Department of Justice-funded research project entitled Hiring In The Spirit of Service identified the following as **core competencies** for law enforcement officers:

- Ability to use good judgment and to problem solve
- Capacity for empathy and compassion
- Capacity for multi-tasking
- Ability to demonstrate courage and to take responsibility
- Ability to be resourceful and show initiative
- Demonstrate assertiveness
- Possess and demonstrate integrity
- Capacity for engaging in teamwork and ability to collaborate.

Philosophical Dimension

- ***Citizen Input*** - Police agencies need extensive input from citizens on problems, priorities, policies, etc.
- ***Broad Function*** - Policing is a broad function - it is much more than just law enforcement.
- ***Personal Service*** - Policing works best when officers know citizens and deliver personalized service - the opposite of "stranger" policing.

Strategic Dimension

- ***Re-Oriented Operations*** - Police look beyond traditional strategies of routine patrol, rapid response, and detective investigations and utilize proactive strategies and tactics.
- ***Prevention Emphasis*** - Whenever possible, police should emphasize preventing crime rather than simply reacting after the fact.
- ***Geographic Focus*** - Policing should be organized and deployed to maximize the extent of identification between specific officers and specific neighborhoods.

Tactical Dimension

- ***Positive Interaction*** - Police should positively interact with all segments of the community - especially since the nature of police work guarantees that some negative interaction is inevitable.
- ***Partnerships*** - Police should partner with the community to deal with crime/problems, including collaborating with public and private agencies.
- ***Problem Solving*** - Police and citizens should take every opportunity to address the conditions that cause incidents and crimes.

Organizational Dimension

- ***Structure*** - Police agencies should re-examine their structures to assure that they support and facilitate community policing.
- ***Management*** - Police agencies should re-examine the way people are supervised and managed to assure consistency with community policing.
- ***Information*** - Police agencies should re-examine their information systems to make sure they support and facilitate community policing.

Variations in Community Policing

- Community policing varies from one community to the next.
- Community policing in a large, metropolitan city may be different than community policing in a small, rural area.
- Community policing is dynamic and it changes with the community, crime rates, mobilization of citizens, region of the country, and other social and environmental factors.

For China, it might be again emphasized here that:

- **Community policing focuses on crime and social disorder through the delivery of police services that includes aspects of traditional law enforcement, as well as prevention, problem-solving, community engagement, and partnerships.**
- **The community policing model balances reactive responses to calls for service with proactive problem-solving centered on the causes of crime and disorder.**
- **Community policing requires police and citizens to join together as partners.**

Problem-Oriented Policing and
Community-Oriented Policing

As an aid in considering the comparisons between problem-oriented policing and community policing, policies the following is offered:

Selected Comparisons Between Problem-Oriented Policing
and Community Policing Principles

Principle	Problem-Oriented Policing	Community-Oriented Policing
Primary emphasis	Substantive social problems within police mandate	Engaging the community in the policing process
When police and community collaborate	Determined on a problem by problem basis	Always or nearly always
Emphasis on problem analysis	Highest priority given to thorough analysis	Encouraged, but less important than community collaboration
Preference for responses	Strong preference that alternatives to criminal law enforcement be explored	Preference for collaborative responses with community
Role for police in organizing and mobilizing community	Advocated only if warranted within the context of the specific problem being addressed	Emphasizes strong role for police
Importance of geographic decentralization of police and continuity of officer assignment to community	Preferred, but not essential	Essential
Degree to which police share decision-making authority with community	Strongly encourages input from community while preserving ultimate decision-making authority to police	Emphasizes sharing decision-making authority with community
Emphasis on officer skills	Emphasizes intellectual and analytical skills	Emphasizes interpersonal skills
View of the role or mandate of police	Encourages broad, but not unlimited role for police, stresses limited capacities of police and guards against creating unrealistic expectations of police	Encourages expansive role for police to achieve ambitious social objectives

Select Board:

Robert A. MacFarland - Chairman

Joann C. Austin

Irene L. Belanger

Ronald R. Breton

Neil L. Farrington