

Some examples:

A three month before and after snap shot of criminal activity an calls for service at Highgate Apartments shows are marked reduction after we **executed search warrants and arrested people connected to ongoing drug trafficking.**

From 10/18 to 12/18 there were **73** calls for service/ crimes at Highgate Apts

From 01/19 to 03/19 there were **42** calls service/crimes at Highgate Apts. — **a 45.5% reduction**, nothing short of amazing.

An additional example from the residents in and around Currier Park is more antidotal but the execution of warrants and arrest in the general area have improved the quality of life near the park and residents have expressed that things are better and they feel safe now using the park .

The formation of the SCU and the work being accomplished by everyone as a result of this has more than proven its value.

However, **I do not believe this is something we can maintain without increasing our staffing** and by providing the necessary funds needed to cover the OT involved for the number of officers needed to safely execute warrants and conduct surveillance, etc.

This is in conjunction with all the support from our neighboring communities as well as State, and Federal partners just for the SCU.

We have a **momentum and pace** going that is working unfortunately it is not one that we can maintain.

To do this effectively and safely we need to increase our staffing **by at least 2 officers, just to cover the SCU.**

In addition to maintaining the SCU I have taken a hard look at case load, call volume ,and how much it relates to officer safety (which also translates into citizen safety) and officer burn out.

The numbers speak for themselves. BCPD is the busiest in Central Vermont if not the State.

Our officer per capita ratio is nowhere near the State average and still would not be there with the addition of six officers.

This is not just a calls for service comparison and BCPD officers have a higher arrest rate per officer than any of the four communities that we looked at. Even when taking the four communities average, BCPD officers were 34% higher.

In addition to the SCU there are a lot of things going on at the police department that do not necessarily draw the attention that the SCU cases do but have a profound and positive impact on the quality of life for citizens.

As part of the previously mentioned subsidized positions we have **detectives who have been specially trained** in forensic interview, domestic violence, digital phone evidence recovery, internet crimes against children, domestic violence investigations, etc.

We have **partnered with Circle to provide two part time investigators to review and further investigate all domestic violence cases in the County.** This at little to no cost to the City residents and looks out for the best interest and safety of victims of domestic violence. It also strengthens our working relationships with the community, (SACT, Circle, Our House, ETC)

As things stand now **we are in desperate need of additional officers.** This is not a new subject, but it is one that consistently never gets added to our police department budget or makes it past the conversation stage at a council meeting, and while we have seen budget increases over the last five years that are associated with cost of living, healthcare, and insurances the departments operational budget has been flat.

This pattern is not sustainable and we need to increase our Police Department workforce and operational budget to deal with the issues at hand. The longer this continues the harder it will be to repair.

NOTES: _____



City of Barre Police Department



2019 Update
Chief Timothy J. Bombardier

What we look like today

Staffing

The Barre City Police Department consists of **20 sworn police officer positions**, five dispatchers, one admin., and one outreach position., Our current table of organization is for 20 full-time officers, includes 2 command staff, 2 SRO's, and 2 detectives, 2 SCU. The SRO and detective positions are partially funded by outside sources, not by the City, leaving fewer than 12 patrol officers.

Capabilities

Patrol: Officers working Patrol in the City are the first responders for almost every incident, from citizen assists to homicides. When not responding to calls for service officers engage in proactive enforcement for motor vehicle and criminal activity.

Detectives: The two detectives are responsible for major investigations including child abuse and neglect, domestic violence, and felony cases that require a sustained time commitment. Our detectives have specialized training in forensic interviews, DV investigation, electronic evidence recovery and more.

School Resource Officers (SRO): The SROs provide safety and security for our children in both the Elementary School and the High School and handle any police related matters at the schools.

Street Crimes Unit (SCU): The SCU is a rapid response team that exists to address emerging trends and needs on a week to week basis, creating flexible and dynamic responses, interventions and prevention strategies to mitigate criminal activity in the City of Barre, namely drug interdictions narcotic sale investigations, property crimes, directed patrols/proactive enforcement, Major Violent Crimes

Dispatch: Dispatch Police, Fire, and EMS in the city as well as four other FD/EMS units.

Community Outreach: Embedding a police social worker and has been key in reaching vulnerable populations and dealing with issues beyond what a first responded is equipped to address.

How we compare to others

In the Spring of 2019 a Norwich University Intern was asked to document and compare Barre City Police Department with several other Vermont departments and their communities. The findings were striking.

While the City of Barre has a residential population of approximately 8,500 to 9,000 people one statistic estimates that **our day-time population can swell to over 20,000.**

Our **population to officer ratio is extremely low** by Vermont standards, and with the swell in the daytime population, this ratio drops below 1 officer per 1,000 people.

Officers Per 1,000 Residents	
VT Average	Barre City
3.5	2.2

The stark reality is the low officer to population ratio along with an **extremely demanding caseload** in taxing on our staff and other resources.

Statistics examined and compiled revealed that BCPD responded to 11,491 calls for service in 2018 and initial estimates for 2019 were around 12,500. We are now on pace for approximately **13,500+ calls for service** for the current calendar year 2019. (675 calls per officer average)

Officer arrest comparisons all show and support the fact the BCPD officers are some of the busiest and hardest working police officers around:

Arrests per Officer			
Burlington	S. Burlington	Montpelier	Barre City
16.9	19.9	14.1	25.8

The high volume of arrests is also important to consider because arrests take up valuable time and people-power that could otherwise be used for proactive measures

Arrests are not the only portion of law enforcement that take up significant time and people-power, but it is a very good indicator where we need to be with staffing.

What does this mean?

Since starting here in 2007 I have maintained that we have needed a **minimum of (24) twenty-four officers.**

If we were to try and keep up with the average per capita posted by Vermont Police Departments and nationally it would boost our ranks to numbers right around thirty sworn officers. This is not realistic even if it was affordable, which it is not.

However, **we are in need of six additional officers and have been for quite some time now.** While we have set a very aggressive pace in dealing with the criminal element in the City by the formation of the SCU and changing our Table of Organization, I do not believe it is a pace that can be maintained with our current staffing numbers.

Some people may ask “Does the SCU and re-organization really make a difference?” The answer is yes it does for example:

- ◆ The SCU has proven its value with increased numbers of search warrants and arrests the majority of them being related to drug activity and drug motivated crimes.
- ◆ While in theory the SCU acts as a force multiplier for day shift, the reality is the cases generated by the SCU put an additional burden on all staff, because of the additional search warrants, arrests, motor vehicle stops, surveillance, etc.
- ◆ The SCU has demonstrated that we have the ability to positively affect criminal activity within the City and get the word out on the street “don’t bring your drugs to Barre.”

This has resulted in criminals moving their base of operations to neighboring communities. Which has drawn some criticism, but the reality is that it makes them even more vulnerable to detection. The SCU stays after them and continues to address the issue when the continue to impact quality of life in the City of Barre.

This type of work positively effects the quality of life for the surrounding neighbors when one of these problem groups or individuals are removed.