



**BALTIMORE CITY COUNCIL
PUBLIC SAFETY AND
GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS
COMMITTEE**

Mission Statement

On behalf of the Citizens of Baltimore City, the Public Safety and Government Operations will be responsible for matters concerning public safety, including, but not limited to; emergency preparedness, police services, fire/EMS, and the executive, administrative, and operational functions of the city government and libraries.

**The Honorable Mark Conway
Chairman**

PUBLIC HEARING

**Wednesday, October 27, 2021
1:00 PM**

**Council Bill: 21-0072R
Investigative Hearing –
District Action Plans and Focused Patrols**

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BILL SYNOPSIS

Committee: Public Safety and Government Operations

Bill 21-0072R

**Investigative Hearing –
District Action Plans and Focused Patrols**

Sponsor: Councilman Mark Conway

Introduced: October 4, 2021

Purpose:

For the purpose of inviting the Police Commissioner of the Baltimore Police Department to appear before the Baltimore City Council to discuss how the department can develop and implement District Action Plans as a system to manage the reduction of community crime; establish achievement or impact objectives that define desired outcomes; and monitor district-level strategies and tactics to evaluate shifting crime trends.

Effective: N/A

Agency Reports

Law Department	
Police Department	

Analysis

Background

From 2008 through 2014 Baltimore City recorded 7-consecutive years with less than 300 homicides. A lot of the strategies and tactics that were used to reduce community crime were created by the men and women who served as commanders of the police patrol districts during those times. The police department managed the effectiveness of those strategies and tactics through their Comp Stat process. Through this oversight process senior-level commanders were able to provide additional resources to communities that were experiencing significant spikes in crime that couldn't be addressed solely by personnel at the district-level. But as time went on many of those commanders who had saw success in reducing crime received promotions to higher ranks or retired with the constant change of administrations. The individuals who replaced those Commanders were left to piece-meal crime strategies and tactics together the best way they knew how with no historical reference to draw from in the decision-making process.

District Action Plans create a system that memorializes year over year district crime, community concerns, locations, suspects, and how those problems were addressed so that future Commanders, sector supervisors, and post officers can have a document of reoccurring problems and the different tactics that were successful and unsuccessful to resolve those issues. District Action Plans also create a common operating picture for everyone working within that specific police district. Post objectives give patrol officers working in designated areas on each shift clear direction on what to look for and what actions have been or need to be taken to further remedy the issue.

District Action Plans

To build trust and collaboration between the community and city government, both sides have to come together and establish community priorities. Practically, the police District Commander should be responsible for developing a District Action Plan in collaboration with members of the District Community Relations Council, residents, and business owners. They should be directed to begin the drafting of these plans 45-days prior to the start of the new year so that they are operational on January 1st.

These yearly plans will take a data-driven approach to address community problems in real time, while also supporting our police district commander's response to quality of life and violent crime incidents. Currently, there are 121 police patrol post citywide. These action plans should focus on the top three reoccurring crime and quality of life problems affecting each patrol post within every police district. The determination of whether a problem is prevalent should be supported by statistical data, incident reports, community complaints, officer observations, and other metrics. Once these action plans have been drafted, the District Commander and their management team will be responsible for developing strategies and tactics that focus on those identified issues in an effort to reduce crime and the fear of crime.

- As a part of the District Action Plan process:
 - District Commanders should hold weekly crime strategies and tactics meetings, and
 - Biweekly District Stat meetings with all sector supervisors, shift commander's, and other district supervisors to review plan metrics, and discuss what progress is being made on the items identified as reoccurring problems and present any new information that needs to be focused on.

- District Commander's should have their Crime Analysis Units work closely with the Data-Driven Strategies Division to compile information, leverage resources, and work to request additional resources as needed.
- Personnel from the Neighborhood Services Unit should also attend these meetings to share community complaints with shift commanders and sector supervisors. They should be responsible for reporting all non-police related complaints to the appropriate city agency and work with them to resolve community issues.
- Focused Patrols
 - Each post officer will be required to focus on the top reoccurring crime problems on their post as established in the District Action Plan, the areas and people that are the drivers of quality of life and violent crime that need special attention, and issues that require assistance from other city agencies. These objectives should be focused on in addition to their primary duties of answering calls for service.
- Collaborative Patrols
 - The violence in our city has a rippling effect on all of the partner and anchor institutions that do business here. Some of these institutions have established police departments and security forces that can aid in the crime fight. The police department should invite allied agencies within the area of those specific police districts to participate in the District Stat process to bridge the gap in information sharing and coordination of collaborative patrols. This will assist with establishing designated footprints of land where they can provide a supplemental presence to deter crime and quality of life issues.

Additional Information

Information Source(s):

Analysis by: Samuel Johnson
Analysis Date: October 26, 2021

Direct Inquiries to: (410) 396-1091

CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 21-0072R
(First Reader)

Introduced by: Councilmembers Conway, McCray, Porter, Bullock, Middleton, Glover, Torrence
Introduced and read first time: October 4, 2021
Assigned to: Public Safety and Government Operations Committee

REFERRED TO THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES: City Solicitor, Baltimore Police Department

A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

1 A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning

2 **Investigative Hearing - District Action Plans and Focused Patrols**

3 FOR the purpose of inviting the Police Commissioner of the Baltimore Police Department to
4 appear before the Baltimore City Council to discuss how the department can develop and
5 implement District Action Plans as a system to manage the reduction of community crime,
6 establish achievement or impact objectives that define desired outcomes, and monitor
7 district-level strategies and tactics to evaluate shifting crime trends.

8 **Recitals**

9 Community policing encourages interactive partnerships with relevant stakeholders. The
10 range of potential partners is large, and these partnerships can be used to accomplish the 2
11 interrelated goals of developing solutions to problems through collaborative problem solving and
12 improving public trust. A fundamental principle of community policing is that, “the public
13 should play a role in prioritizing and addressing public safety problems.”

14 On the forefront of this interaction are the District Commanders and Patrol Officers working
15 in our neighborhood police districts. Patrol has long been referred to as the "backbone of
16 policing" because in the vast majority of police departments, the largest percentage of police
17 personnel are assigned to patrol. The effectiveness of patrol operations within a police
18 department is usually judged by 3 major functions. These include answering calls for service,
19 deterring crime by a highly visible police presence, and investigating suspicious circumstances.

20 To build trust and collaboration between the community and police, both sides have to come
21 together and establish community priorities. Practically, every January each police District
22 Commander should be responsible for developing a District Action Plan in collaboration with
23 members of the District Community Relations Council, residents and business owners. These
24 action plans should focus on the top 3 to 5 reoccurring crime problems and quality of life issues
25 affecting each patrol post within the district. The determination of whether a problem is
26 prevalent should be supported by statistical data, incident reports, community complaints, officer
27 observations and other metrics.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS indicate matter added to existing law.
[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Council Bill 21-0072R

1 Once these action plans have been drafted, the District Commander and their management
2 team should be responsible for developing strategies and tactics that focus on those issues in an
3 effort to reduce crime and quality of life issues. This should be accomplished through the
4 implementation of effective strategies and tactics that are prudently designed to bring about the
5 desired outcomes of crime reduction and disorder, and through a systematic approach of working
6 in collaboration with allied agencies. In order to bring about permanent change, these tactics
7 must be comprehensive, flexible, and adaptable to the shifting crime trends the police department
8 identifies and monitors.

9 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That the
10 Baltimore City Council invites the Police Commissioner to discuss how the department can
11 develop and implement District Action Plans as a system to manage the reduction of community
12 crime; establish achievement or impact objectives that define desired outcomes; and monitor
13 district-level strategies and tactics to evaluate shifting crime trends.

14 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Police
15 Commissioner and the Mayor's Legislative Liaison to the Baltimore City Council.

**PUBLIC SAFETY AND
GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS
COMMITTEE**

AGENCY REPORTS

CITY OF BALTIMORE

BRANDON M. SCOTT
Mayor



DEPARTMENT OF LAW

JAMES L. SHEA
100 N. HOLLIDAY STREET
SUITE 101, CITY HALL
BALTIMORE, MD 21202

October 7, 2021

The Honorable President and Members
of the Baltimore City Council
Attn: Natawna B. Austin, Executive Secretary
Room 409, City Hall, 100 N. Holliday Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Re: City Council Bill 21-0072R – Informational Hearing - District Action Plans and
Focused Patrols

Dear President and City Council Members:

The Law Department has reviewed City Council Bill 21-0072R for form and legal sufficiency. The resolution is for the purpose of inviting the Police Commissioner of the Baltimore Police Department to appear before the Baltimore City Council to discuss how the department can develop and implement District Action Plans as a system to manage the reduction of community crime, establish achievement or impact objectives that define desired outcomes, and monitor district-level strategies and tactics to evaluate shifting crime trends.

In general, a City Council resolution is “an expression of opinion or mind concerning some particular item of business coming within the legislative body’s official cognizance.” *Inlet Assocs. v. Assateague House Condominium Assoc.*, 545 A.2d 1296, 1303 (Md. 1988) (quoting *McQuillin Mun. Corp.* § 15:2 (3rd Ed.)). Council Bill 21-0037R is an appropriate resolution to discuss the topics outlined in this bill.

Accordingly, the Law Department is prepared to approve Council Bill 21-0072R for form and legal sufficiency.

Sincerely,

Victor K. Tervala

Victor K. Tervala
Chief Solicitor

cc: James L. Shea, City Solicitor
Nina Themelis, Mayor’s Office of Government Relations
Nikki Thompson, Director of Legislative Affairs
Matthew Stegman, Director of Fiscal and Legislative Services
Elena DiPietro, Chief Solicitor, General Counsel Division
Hilary Ruley, Chief Solicitor
Ashlea Brown, Assistant Solicitor