



BALTIMORE POLICE DEPARTMENT



Brandon M. Scott
Mayor

Michael S. Harrison
Police Commissioner

October 27, 2021

Honorable President and Members of the Baltimore City Council
Room 400, City Hall
100 N. Holliday Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

RE: City Council Bill #21-0072R
Investigative Hearing - District Action Plans and Focused Patrols

Dear Council President Mosby and Members of the City Council:

The Baltimore Police Department (BPD) has reviewed Council Bill 21-0072R which 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.

We appreciate the sponsor's goal of ensuring that the Baltimore Police Department is being strategic and intentional in its effort to target high crime areas by suggesting that we prepare annual District Action Plans that target 3 to 5 reoccurring crime problems and quality of life issues in that District. In fact, our District and Criminal Investigations Commanders develop plans in a way similar to that described in the resolution.

Since crime has historical patterns and seasonal trends, our Commanders are required to develop quarterly action plans that utilize an analysis of historic trends, along with ongoing current patterns/trends to determine what is the #1 highest priority problem related to violent crime for their District or area of responsibility for centralized units. Each plan is designed to prevent, interrupt, and solve crime; integrate community and governmental partners; maximize organizational effectiveness; and incorporate equity and must include the following items:

- ✓ An analysis of when/where those crimes occur, who the victims of those crimes typically are and any environmental factors that contribute to the crimes.
- ✓ An action plan that defines exactly what steps supervisors, analysts, detectives, NCOs and officers must take to prevent/address the crime (*ex: foot patrol in a specified area; meeting with strategic business and community leaders; reporting environmental factors such as trash and poor lighting to 311*).
- ✓ A measure that the Commander will track for each employee category to ensure they are following the strategy (*ex: Detectives: increased case closure; NCOs: number of community meetings, business checks completed weekly and recorded in CAD; Officers: required amount of foot patrols and business checks are recorded in CAD*).

- ✓ 3-5 data points that will prove that the strategy is having the desired effect (*Ex: a percentage decrease in the prioritized crime category and an increase in closure rates*).
- ✓ A list of community organizations and city partners with whom the District or Unit are working on the problem identified. (*Ex: ROCA, Turn Around, City Forestry, DOT, management of a shopping center, etc.*).
- ✓ A list of community organizations, city partners, or other resources who are not currently working with the District/Unit on the identified problem, and how developing a partnership would contribute to addressing the problem.

Since those committing crimes adjust to deployments if they are static, Commanders must develop weekly crime plans that support the quarterly plan but that are highly specific and responsive to the current trends they are seeing. For each shift in each sector, the plan lists *exactly* where members must walk foot, conduct business checks, engage in directed patrols, and engage in traffic enforcement. They also list the priority warrants that they are working to serve; any notable events occurring that week in their District; and where/how/when supervisors are to conduct inspections and any special instructions they are to provide at the beginning of every shift.

Just like the quarterly action plans, the weekly crime plans must include metrics that are tracked in Comstat. For instance, they have targets for the amount of warrants served and the amount of high visibility presence in specific areas.

In addition to the quarterly and weekly plans, we have been in the process of implementing the Departmental Community Policing Plan that was developed with substantial input from residents, members, the Department of Justice and our federal Monitoring Team. You can find the plan at this link: <https://www.baltimorepolice.org/transparency/bpd-policies/10-bpd-community-policing-plan>. The first step in implementation was ensuring that all members of the Department have completed the Community Policing training which was coproduced with members of the community and which you can find at this link: <https://www.baltimorepolice.org/transparency/bpd-policies/na-community-policing-training>. The overall goal of the training was to teach officers how positive interactions, voluntary contacts help to establish relationships and form partnerships with the community serve. It also emphasized strategies to problem solve and prevent crime and disorder by solving problems and not just responding to calls for service.

We have also established Neighborhood Policing Plan pilot programs in Brooklyn/Curtis Bay and Fayette Street Outreach. Although we are still in the strategy and assessment phases of the pilots, we have spent a significant amount of time working with community leaders to identify specific problem areas, name partners such as various city agencies and nonprofits that need to assist in addressing the problems and the initial steps that need to be taken to address the concerns. This process which is intended to address the systemic causes of crime in the target area is complex and labor intensive, but can truly change the trajectory of the health and safety of a neighborhood while building community capacity, empowering residents, establishing neighborhood guardians and strengthening relationships with residents.

The BPD supports City Council Bill 21-0072R and appreciates the opportunity to explain the thoughtful and strategic ways we are working to address crime while also simultaneously engaging with residents in meaningful ways. We look forward to further discussing our efforts at the hearing.

Sincerely,



Michelle Wirzberger, Esq.
Director of Government Affairs

cc: Natwana Austin, Executive Secretary of the Baltimore City Council
Natasha Mehu, Director of Mayor's Office of Government Relations
Nina Themalis, Special Assistant and Legislative Liaison, MOGR
Brittany Lewis, Chief of Government Affairs, Office of the Council President
Eric Melancon, BPD Chief of Staff
Andrew Smullian, BPD Deputy Chief of Staff