Crime Prevention & Violence Reduction Plan*
October 2021

(*The City of Portsmouth Crime Prevention and Violence Prevention Plan is a living document that will be continually evaluated to ensure its strategies are producing results that are aligned with the City’s priorities.*)
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(*The City of Portsmouth Crime Prevention and Violence Prevention Plan is a living document that will be continually evaluated to ensure its strategies are producing results that are aligned with the City's priorities.*)
INTRODUCTION:

The city will use a collaborative problem-solving approach driven by data, analysis, feedback, and accountability. We will collaborate with local, state, and federal partners to assist with crime prevention and violence reduction strategies and use accurate data to inform the strategic deployment of resources to arrest violent offenders and reduce the fear of crime in our neighborhoods. Clear communication and direction will be given to all strategy stakeholders to ensure there is no confusion regarding roles and responsibilities.

PLAN & STRATEGY HIGHLIGHTS:

The comprehensive action plan and strategies would address:

- Building strong community engagement and partnerships.
- Prevention and Intervention Programs.
- Focusing on data driven enforcement.
- Providing safer and healthier neighborhoods.
- Partnering with grassroot organizations.
- Identify solutions that address the City’s crime objectives.

The City is committed to addressing the epidemic of gun violence and other violent crime that has taken the lives of too many people in our communities. That commitment requires regular review to ensure that our approach remains effective, grounded in research, and consistent with our values. And this is an important moment for reassessment. After decades of falling sharply, preliminary statistics suggest that certain categories of violent crime increased significantly last year. We have faced a national public health emergency that put people out of work, closed schools, created pressures at home, limited social services, impacted criminal justice systems, and generally disrupted social activity. We have seen civil unrest as people question the legitimacy of our institutions and the role of law enforcement in society. We cannot be effective in guarding the safety of our communities without their confidence in police and policing. And we know that violent crime is not a problem that can be solved by law enforcement alone.

The City’s crime reduction plan involves addressing the root cause of crime by using a systemic and holistic approach in changing cultural norms and policies in a collaborative and comprehensive manner.

One way to understand the nature and extent of crime in our city is to analyze statistical trends and to evaluate the effectiveness of strategies implemented to make our communities safer. A look at the crime trends in Portsmouth illuminates the need for a comprehensive strategy that addresses the major issue of crime.
Portsmouth has a population of 94,398 as of (2019). The per capita income is $26,312 and the median household income as of (2019) was $52,175. Individuals below the poverty level equates to an estimated 16.8%.

Educational attainment of adults is 5% attending college, 88.3% are high school graduates and 21.9% are college graduates.

Portsmouth has the highest percentage of tax-exempt property in the state. At 41% per the City Assessor, and 59% of taxable property estimated at 41.9% of the city’s total general fund revenue.

CAUSES OF CRIME

Causes of Crime are complex but can be connected to:

- Poverty,
- Low self-esteem,
- Unemployment,
- Alcohol and drug abuse

**POVERTY** is perhaps one of the most concrete reasons why people commit crimes. Economic deprivation is seen as a major instigator.

You will be shocked to know that 3 billion people in this world are categorized as poor and living on a very low per capita income.

More than 20,000 children die due to poverty every day. In a country where economic deprivation is rampant, it is common for people to engage in criminal acts. Hunger and poor economic conditions lead many people to criminal activity.

Many young people engage in criminal activities because they believe it is their responsibility to take care of their impoverished household(s) even if it means to commit a felony.

Society dictates, currently, that money is valued more than relationships and a normal standard of life.

If you’re not able to provide for the entire family as an impoverished individual, at some point, you may consider taking a negative path to take care of the family's needs.
LOW SELF-ESTEEM is a new form of concern in the modern world. Many young people commit crimes and use drugs because they see a lot of their peers engaging in such acts.

Youth is a very critical period because one is not always filled with wisdom and experience.

Youth and young adults become criminals by committing criminal acts due to a lack of strong will and peer pressure.

UNEMPLOYMENT is a skyrocketing factor in many countries. It is often the main reason why so many people commit crimes; more than 30% of people in this world are unemployed.

Many young people destroy their future career opportunities when they engage in criminal activities very early in life resulting in being unable to qualify jobs due to a blemished criminal background.

DRUG AND ALCOHOL ADDICTION is another rampantly growing disease in our society today. As many as 0.7 million people die from drug addiction in US.

Most violent criminals, when asked about their crimes, often blamed drugs as the main reason. A poor lifestyle compels a person to adopt habits which they would normally distance themselves from.

CRIME PROFILE

KEY DATA:

National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) details by the Portsmouth Police Department reported, for the last ten years, 2011-2020, there were 6,128 violent-crime incidents, and 6,922 offenses reported by the Portsmouth Police Department.
Perhaps the most heartbreaking fact about our current surge in gun violence is that it is impacting our children, with most shooting victims being 30-years and younger. We also know that most violence is perpetrated on individuals of a similar age, so it is likely that even though we do not yet know the age of offenders, it is likely that they are of similar age. As members of society, we need to be cognizant that while gun violence yields an offender and a victim, we lose both individuals. We owe it to our future to create a nurturing and abundant community where our young people can flourish.
## Larceny from Motor Vehicles

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Where violent crime occurs in the city

Most of Portsmouth’s violent crimes are occurring in and around its public housing developments. The high frequency areas include Dale Homes, Southside, Swanson Homes, portions of Airline Blvd. and High St.

CURRENT STRATEGIES
Crime prevention consists of strategies that help determine the criminal, reduce the crime rate, and minimize the risk of their harmful effect on people’s lives and society that increases crime fear. It is applied by the City’s efforts to address the cause, improve perceptions, enforce the law, maintain criminal justice to reduce and prevent crime from occurring. A comprehensive plan involves every resource the city has to address the causes of violent crimes and criminal activity and to limit its impact. We also recognize that all parties will need to play an active role in improving public safety in the City of Portsmouth.

We must always consider the impact that violence and our mitigation strategies will have on the community – many of which have been historically underserved. As such, we have created a three-pillar strategy, which we believe will reduce crime and improve the lives of those we serve.

**THREE-PILLAR STRATEGY** approach is what the City of Portsmouth is using in addressing our violent crime within a Public Safety Framework, where any and every facet of what we do as a city will be used to reduce crime with a focus on violent crime. Public safety is and will always be the number one priority. Our Public Safety Framework will be comprised of three pillars: developing safe and effective employees; crime prevention, intervention, and community engagement/investment; and lastly enforcement. Each Pillar will contain various services or programs that the city has implemented and/or under consideration for implementation to reduce crime.

### First Pillar: Developing safe and effective employees

The City of Portsmouth expects its officers and other employees to always be effective and professional. Achieving this expectation requires an adequately staffed and trained organization.

**Recruitment and Retention**
All Departments - Human Resources Management
Ongoing Initiative

**Action:** To address issues with overwork and morale, the city is seeking to increase the size of its workforce by increasing salaries, offering sign-on bonuses, addressing pay decompression, and engaging in a national
recruitment campaign (police). The city is also looking to address workplace satisfaction by improving working conditions and equipment.

**Completed to date:**
1) Identified potential source for retention bonuses.
2) Identified potential source for vehicle replacement (public safety).
3) Reviewing each department for pay decompression issues.
4) Creating new positions to enable succession planning.

### Sheriff’s Deputy Deployment in Collaboration with Police Department
**Sheriff’s Office and Police Department**
**Ongoing Initiative**

**Action:** To supplement the number of trained and accredited public safety professionals interacting with the public, the Sheriff’s Office has been joining PPD as uniformed patrol throughout the City. Not only does this reduce physical and mental stress on Police Officers, but it also provides a new set of experience to Sheriff’s Deputies, which is known to reduce burnout.

**Completed to date:**
1) Enables School Resource Officers in PPS (High/Middle) to deter crime in the schools.
2) Increases visibility of officers for strategic assignments.

### Crisis Intervention Training
**Departments of Social Services and Behavioral Healthcare Services**
**Ongoing Initiative**

**Action:** The Departments of Social Services and Behavioral Health are providing Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) for police officers and various departments citywide. Started in Memphis 20 years ago, CIT teaches officers how to look at individuals from a mental health perspective and help them outside of criminal justice framework. CIT has been implemented as part of in-service training, and many departments have committed their employees to engaging in training.

**Completed to date:**
1) Assist police officers in identifying mental health issues.
2) Divert individuals with mental health issues from being incarcerated.
3) Developed adaptive coping strategies for current and future crises.

Case Preparation and Prosecution Practices Training
Commonwealth Attorney, Police Department and State/Federal Investigators
Under Consideration for Expansion

**Action:** While every officer receives case preparation training in the academy, the intricacies, and particulars of what is needed to prosecute a case evolves with the unique aspects of each case. This preparation often requires partnering with the Commonwealth Attorney’s office, federal partners, the City Attorney’s office, and others. These partners help educate officers on how to strengthen their cases to increase the probability of successful prosecution of violent offenders.

**Completed to date:**
1) TBD

Technology Usage and Implementation
Information Technology, Human Resources Management and Police Department
In Development

**Action:** The city has a variety of technologies which can greatly improve employee efficiency and thereby reduce employee stress. Ensuring that employees are well trained in technologies and how to use them in their day-to-day work can reduce overtime and thereby reduce burnout and fatigue related mistakes. This will also release employees to do more of their core functions such as patrols or community relations.

**Completed to date:**
1) Prioritized technology projects in support of virtual work atmosphere.
2) Pursuing resources for implementation.

Revision of Internal/External Operations and Procedures
Police Department, City Attorney’s Office
In development

**Action:** Review policies and procedures to make sure that Police are
interacting with the public as much as possible while reducing bureaucracy as much as reasonable. It is shown and understood that police visibility is directly tied to citizen feelings of safety, and therefore, eliminating time that police are not visible in the community is a paramount concern.

**Completed to date:**

1) Reevaluated policies that were cancelled as of the pandemic to increase police presence.
2) Implemented targeted policing because of staffing shortages.
3) Visibility at civic league meetings.

**Data-driven Policing Implementation**

**Police Department, City Attorney's Office, Information Technology Expansion**

**Action:** Data-driven policing can improve efficiency and enable police to be where crime tends to occur. Knowing where there are elevated levels of crime and firearm crime can tell police where to conspicuously patrol and thereby discourage violent crime. Intelligence-driven analyses identify crime trends to forecast potential criminal activity. When units within the Department utilize these tools, we ensure that our resources are directed to the areas of need based on crime data rather than on socio-economic factors or implicit bias.

**Completed to date:**

1) Public Safety Data Dashboard under development.
2) **(New)** Upon completion of an investigation of serious criminal activities and gun violence, and a review of those findings pursuant to the Code of Virginia, the Virginia Alcoholic Beverage Control Board issued a ruling in support of summarily suspending the Virginia ABC licenses for the Pure Diamonds Restaurant & Lounge. The PPD served a Summary Suspension Order on the ABC Manager for the Pure Diamonds Restaurant & Lounge Friday, Dec. 17, 2021. Effective immediately, the Pure Diamonds establishment may not sell, serve, consume, or purchase any alcoholic beverages during the Virginia ABC Bureau of Law Enforcement’s and the PPD's long-term investigation.

**Frontline and Retention Bonuses**

**Finance Department**

In development, Ongoing
**Action:** All frontline employees will receive a Frontline Bonus of $1,500 as a way of thanking them for shouldering the stress of a pandemic with professionalism. Using ARPA money, this initiative will improve employee morale and help with inflationary pressures in the community and nation.

**Completed to date:**
1) Determined compliance with ARPA guidelines.
2) Developed recommendation and submitted to City Council for consideration.

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**Second Pillar: Crime prevention, Intervention and Community Engagement/Investment**

To address the root cause of violence by promoting and strengthening partnerships within the community to help ensure collaborative problem-solving, ethical, and unbiased policing, and increased community trust and confidence in the City.

- **Direct Payments to Individuals or Families**
  - Finance Department, Social Services
  - In development

**Action:** The city will leverage ARPA funding to provide a variety of direct payments to individuals. By giving directly to people, the city is providing relief to those who most need it.

**Completed to date:**
1) Determined compliance with ARPA guidelines.
2) Developed recommendation and submitted to City Council for consideration.
3) Developed criteria for how the funds would be allocated, if approved.

- **Youth Programs in Schools**
  - City Manager’s Office, Parks and Recreation
  - Ongoing Initiative

**Action:** City and PPS’ representatives are actively engaged in discussions to utilize schools’ facilities after hours to host recreational and educational
programs. Schools are well situated near some of the city’s high crime areas, and so utilizing these facilities can help protect children and divert at-risk children from criminal activities. We will also research and develop Safe School Zone signage to provide additional support in school zones.

**Completed to date:**

1) Partnered with PPS to identify schools – currently in 4 schools, will add more in the future as staffing levels permit.

2) Conducted interviews with youth at special events, in communities, and recreation centers to ensure programs were of interest.

3) Designed a variety of programs to attract youth with different interests; increased operating hours to include Saturdays at recreation centers and 3 schools.

4) Hired teen and adult staff and actively advertising and interviewing for additional positions; more than 15 contractors/partners hired to administer various programs focused on most vulnerable age groups.

5) Implemented additional programs that run from September 2021 through end of academic year.

6) Behavioral Healthcare Services will provide satellite services out of one of the City’s recreation centers to enhance accessibility.

7) *(New)* City staff, in partnership with our community partners, took 45 kids to the holiday lights at the beach Monday, Dec. 20, 2021. Kids enjoyed the holiday lights display, dinner and a surprise stop at the Game On gaming center in Virginia Beach.

8) *(New)* Portsmouth has partnered with several organizations and community activists including Big HOMIES (Eugene Swinson), Back 2 Da Block (Darrell Redmond), Shaniqua High, Saran Day, PRHA, and city staff to provide holiday-themed celebrations including toys, hot meals, activities (Santa, Grinch, games) at Swanson Homes, Southside, Dale Homes/Lexington Place, London Oaks, and Mallard Cove.

Through these partnerships, we were able to provide toys to more than 300 children in the housing complexes/apartments.

| 13 | P a g e |

**Action:** City in partnership with existing youth providers will fund athletic programs that can help divert at-risk children from criminal activities. This will have the added benefit of supporting community groups and charitable organizations that are active and working with children.

**Completed to date:**
1) Determined compliance with ARPA guidelines.
2) Developed recommendation and submitted to City Council for consideration.
3) Developed criteria for how the fund, if approved, would be allocated.
4) Supports existing local organizations that are currently providing positive alternatives for youth.
5) (New) Partnered with Back2 Da Block and Blacktop Basketball to host a community day and flag football tournament at Cavalier Manor Athletic Complex Saturday, Dec. 18, 2021. Attendees played flag football, enjoyed free food and drinks, and united to stand against violence.
6) (New) Partnered with Deshaune Green and the Green Hope Foundation to offer a free basketball clinic Saturday, Dec. 18, 2021, at the Sportsplex. The clinic was very successful, and each participant took home an assortment of Christmas gifts.

Civic League Engagement
Portsmouth Police Department, City Staff
Ongoing Initiative

**Action:** Civic league meetings and formation is a monthly meeting attended by Community Engagement Division officers and relevant city staff where these officers give the community a breakdown on what is occurring in their neighborhood, learn from the community, and collaborate towards solutions which address their concerns. We take these opportunities to share information on what events the city is participating in, as well as provide an update on anything we can report on regarding the community concerns.

**Completed to date:**

1) Implemented several civic leagues recommended solutions (criminal and blighted property citations, traffic calming initiatives, vegetation maintenance, event support, etc.).
2) Established regular civic league communication to share information/solutions.

Community Engagement
City Manager’s Office
Ongoing Initiative
**Action:** The City has established an ongoing partnership with the team coordinator of Sentara’s Trauma Services Unit. Created to assist and track victims of gun violence, the Trauma Services Unit will use its resources to share information and identify effective intervention and prevention strategies. Sentara’s community engagement includes initiatives and investments in partner programs designed to empower individuals.

**Completed to date:**

1) Partnership established to easily obtain data regarding Portsmouth’s trauma victims.
2) Sentara’s Trauma Unit will continue to track patients after initial trauma to prevent future occurrences.

**Community Engagement**
**Portsmouth Police Department**
**Ongoing Initiative**

**Action:** Community Engagement efforts enable the Portsmouth Police Department to engage with the community and have an opportunity to enhance trust. By making the police department available to the citizens where they are, we have an opportunity to discuss any issues or concerns.

**Completed to date:**

1) Reassigned police officers to three districts to target policing.
2) Reinstated police walks in communities, event participation, philanthropy, etc.
3) 5)

**Community Organization Engagement**
**City Staff**
**Ongoing Initiative**

**Action:** The city will expand its Community and Regional Organization programs to address community needs. This program will be expanded using ARPA funding to pay for organizations to provide services directly to citizens. The hope is that this effort will break down traditional barriers that have stood between the city and its not-for-profit partners.

**Completed to date:**

1) Determined compliance with ARPA guidelines.
2) Developed recommendation and submitted to City Council for
consideration.
3) Developed criteria for how the fund, if approved, would be allocated.

### National Night Out
**Portsmouth Police Department**
**Ongoing Initiative**

**Action:** The purpose of National Night Out (NNO) is to enhance the relationship between neighbors and law enforcement while bringing back a true sense of community. Furthermore, it provides a great opportunity to bring police and neighbors together under positive circumstances. NNO is always done on the first Tuesday in August and this year we also had three (3) communities reschedule theirs for the first Tuesday in October since it rained on the original date.

**Completed to date:**

1) Police staff participated on both dates and were able to interact with the community and provide crime prevention tips as well as interact with youth.
2) Provided an opportunity to answer questions from the public in a non-formal, non-confrontational setting.
3) Uploaded pictures to Facebook to highlight the success of the events.

### High Crime Area Lighting
**Marketing and Communications, Code Enforcement**
**Ongoing Initiative**

**Action:** The office of Marketing and Communications, via the Ombudsman, is working with Dominion Energy to ensure that high-crime areas are well-lit. Poor lighting is an environmental consideration that can lead to more crime and violence in an area. It can also help individuals in a community to feel safer and more confident in their homes/neighborhoods.

**Completed to date:**

1) Code Enforcement personnel and police officers monitor lights that are non-functioning and relay that information to the Ombudsman for resolution.
2) City Engineer has submitted an inventory of street light request to
address poor lighting in high crime areas (Cradock & vicinity, Downtown, Olde Towne, Southside and vicinity, Dale Homes-Lincoln Park, Simonsdale-Century Homes, Parkview, Westbury-Swanson-Swanson Homes, and Prentis Park.

**Criminal Blight Property -- Cooperative Cleanup**
Permits and Inspections, City Attorney’s Office
Ongoing Initiative, under consideration for expansion

**Action:** Code enforcement is working with the City Attorney’s Office and the Police Department to identify and clean up properties where criminal activities are known to occur. Many property owners are willing and enthusiastic about abating these issues on their property, and the benefit is usually two-fold, as the abatement can involve clearing overgrowth – a personal nuisance for property owners. In exchange for the abatement, property owners allow police onto the property for the purpose of reducing criminal activity. They will also post “No Trespassing” signs on the property.

**Completed to date:**

1) Criminal blight process established.
2) Code enforcement is actively working with property owners to address concerns.

**Criminal Blight Property -- Adversarial Cleanup**
City Attorney’s Office, Permits and Inspections, City Assessor
Ongoing Initiative

**Action:** While many property owners are enthusiastic partners in eliminating or addressing criminal blight, some property owners are negligent or belligerent participants in the blight. This requires a different tactic, where the city will have to identify violations and issue citations for blight, and if the property owner refuses to cooperate take them to court.

**Completed to date:**

1) Criminal blight citations have been issued.
2) Numerous citations have been issued for unkept “blighted” houses.

**Pre-Tech Curricula**
City Staff, Private or External Partners
In development

**Action:** Staff presented a Pre-Tech initiative to Portsmouth Public Schools (PPS) for middle school students which would introduce skill trades vocations to youth as potential career opportunities.

**Completed to date:**

1) Initial meeting with PPS leadership to discuss the concept.
2) Agreement to pursue further later.
3) CTE staff and city volunteers developing next steps.

**Neighborhood Watch Groups**
**Portsmouth Police Department**
**Ongoing Initiative**

**Action:** Neighborhood Watch Groups, a quarterly summit held at 206 High St., for the purpose of identifying a representative(s) from every neighborhood as an information sharing session. Discussions include what nuisances and activities are causing issues in neighborhoods and what are the proactive measures that can be taken to address those issues. Many times, some of the neighborhoods have the same problems so this is an opportunity to brainstorm, or perhaps one neighborhood can learn from how it was handled by another neighborhood experiencing the same.

**Completed to date:**

1) Neighborhood Watch Groups underway.
3) Workforce Development
**Economic Development**
**Ongoing Initiative**

**Action:** Create outreach strategies for Portsmouth@Work that can better target youth. This will connect working age minors to employers and resources that help them seek employment and develop soft skills. This initiative will erode traditional barriers to employment that have harmed underserved communities.

**Completed to date:**
1) Met with PPS leadership to discuss enhanced collaboration between PPS and City to identify opportunities.
2) Plans to meet with Juvenile Judge Alotha Willis to discuss opportunities.
3) Portsmouth Public Libraries support in-house staff assistance and online resources and tools to support job search and career advancement.
4) Peterson’s Career Prep – online resource accommodates job seekers at all levels providing career assessment, career recommendations, job search and guidance on programs, knowledge, skills, and abilities.
5) Brainfuse Job Now – online resource offers free virtual career prep, resume assistance, etc.

**Faith Behind the Badge**
Portsmouth Police Department
Ongoing Initiative

**Action:** A joint effort of PPD and local faith leaders, this initiative seeks to bridge the gap between law enforcement and community by working through church leaders. In many communities and populations, church leaders are the voices for the community, so we make it a priority to maintain a good relationship with them. Every holiday season we partner with them to identify families in need and donate and hand-deliver a Thanksgiving/Christmas dinner as well as donate Christmas presents to the youth of the families.

**Completed to date:**
1) Plans to continue the tradition this year.

**Night Hawk Basketball**
Parks and Recreation
Ongoing Initiative

**Action:** This program provides an open gym and weight room for individuals in high-crime areas from 10 PM to 1 AM. It is open for individuals aged 18 to 27. No ID or fee is required. The location rotates monthly.

**Completed to date:**
1) Program site rotates monthly at recreation centers to offer multiple
locations throughout the city each year.
2) October – Cavalier Manor.
3) November – J.E. Parker.
4) Rotation begins with Cavalier Manor.

<table>
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<th>Junior Recreation Aides</th>
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<td>Parks and Recreation</td>
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**Action:** As a deterrent to crime, the City recognizes the value of allowing youth to earn wages for essential needs. Parks, Recreation and Tourism explores opportunities to increase youth employment during all hiring processes. Interested individuals can apply via the city website.

**Completed to date:**

1) Reduced the hiring age for Junior Recreation Aides from 18 to 16.
2) Increased the hourly pay from $9.5 to $15 hourly to attract more youth.

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<th>Minority and Women Owned Business Program</th>
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**Action:** The City’s Minority and Women Owned Business program will be evaluated, revised, and bolstered to ensure that it is being engaged frequently not only to ensure equity in awarding city contracts for programs and services but also to identify crime reduction strategies.

**Completed to date:**

1) Minority and Women Owned businesses were included in outreach initiatives to engage the community regarding crime reduction strategies.

**Third Pillar: Crime prevention and reduction**
Interjurisdictional Cooperation
Federal Bureau of Investigation, Drug Enforcement Agency, Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms, US Marshalls, Portsmouth Police Department
Ongoing Initiative

**Action:** Portsmouth Police Department has partnered with the FBI, DEA, ATF, and US Marshal Service to enhance investigative power and jurisdiction. We jointly investigate cases and use their resources for on-scene support, additional personnel, and investigations extending beyond our jurisdiction and returning fleeing felons to our jurisdictional control. This also expands opportunities for training and cross-training city employees to improve long-term outcomes.

**Completed to date:**

1) Developed process to work with law enforcement partners to solve multi-jurisdictional crimes.
2) Expanded training via collaboration with other law enforcement agencies.

Friends of the Portsmouth Juvenile Court (FOPJC)
Portsmouth Police Department, Department of Criminal Justice
Ongoing Initiative

**Action:** Friends Of the Portsmouth Juvenile Court (also referred to as ACT-NOW) is a joint venture developed and funded under a Portsmouth Police Department awarded Department of Criminal Justice Grant that is designed to be a holistic approach to stopping violent crimes. This program includes Violence Interrupters and community outreach along with alternative paths for advancement in society.

**Completed to date:**

1) Funded two Violence Interrupters that have been effective in redirecting youth from crime to workforce development (Two youth were enrolled in the CDL workforce development program and will be employed when completed).
2) Developed survey instrument to obtain data to determine data-driven
solutions for crime prevention.

Saturation Patrols
Portsmouth Police Department, Portsmouth Sheriff’s Office
Ongoing Initiative

**Action:** The Police Department’s Traffic Enforcement Units have initiated saturation patrols to respond to problem areas in the city. Given that law enforcement presence is a large deterrent for motivating individuals not to commit crime, this approach leverages resources to temporarily increase the size and frequency of patrols. The impact of this tactic can reverberate for days or weeks after a patrol.

**Completed to date:**

1) Completed 40 “saturation patrols” in problem/high gun violence areas.
2) Evaluated the impact to measure the impact of the strategy and determined results exceeded expectations.
3) Collaborated with the Sheriff’s Office to complete a PPS security assessment; identified need for metal detectors and 100% search instead of 1-in-5.
4) Sheriff ambassador initiative to expand re-entry program and enhance community engagement.

Interdiction Sweeps
Portsmouth Police Department, Virginia State Police
Ongoing Initiative

**Action:** The Police Department has partnered with the Virginia State Police and their trained interdiction unit that focuses on violent crime reduction. Interdiction is the concept that violent, or drug crime can be prevented using investigation and data-driven approaches. This team focuses on areas with high incidents of violent crime, through proactive contacts and suspect driven leads. Their approach to preventative law enforcement generally has a sizable impact on gun violence and immediately reduces its occurrences.

**Completed to date:**

1) Developed the plan of action for the City of Portsmouth.
Action: The fire service has a nationally known community-based program used to combat the overuse of 911 and to reduce the single facility transports to the hospital emergency rooms. Community Paramedicine/Mobile Integrated Healthcare (CP-MIH) is a relatively new and evolving healthcare model. It allows paramedics and emergency medical technicians (EMTs) to operate in expanded roles by assisting with public health, primary healthcare, and preventive services to underserved populations in the community. The goal is to improve access to care and avoid duplicating existing services. The duplication of services often intersects with behavioral health and social services. We believe there is an opportunity to partner together to provide a multi-disciplinary approach to those who suffer from mental illness and drug addiction.

Completed to date:

1) Implemented the community-based program used to combat the overuse of 911.
2) Developed metrics to evaluate the effectiveness of the program and to determine if results are aligned with expectations.
3) Established a mobile team consisting of Fire/Rescue and Behavioral Health staff to provide Narcan and educate community partners on opioid addiction.

Action: The Portsmouth Police Department’s Vice/Narcotics and Gang Intelligence will follow-up on a complaint about the Mongrel Motorcycle gang attempting to establish a foothold in Portsmouth. This gang is known for its standing in Suffolk. Officers will investigate and take action to disrupt and displace those persons from our community. Federal partners will be
used if we fall under their scope of authority.

**Completed to date:**

1) Investigating the validity of community concerns regarding Motorcycle gang activity.
2) Developed strategies for disrupting and displacing those individuals if laws are not upheld to ensure public safety.

**Youth Curfews**
**Portsmouth Police Department**
**Ongoing Initiative**

**Action:** Youth curfews will enable the Police Department to engage youths in high-violence areas when violence is most likely to occur.

**Completed to date:**

1) Youth curfew hours – 11 p.m. to 5 a.m. are in place for any minor 17 years of age and under.

**Witness Development and Protection**
**Portsmouth Police Department**
**Ongoing Initiative**

**Action:** Utilizing witness protection and tip lines, the Police Department will increase the frequency that the public will share information that can make the community safer. The city will consider rewards for tips and providing robust protection of witnesses to encourage citizens to share information that can help prevent or charge criminal activities.

**Completed to date:**

1) City exploring rewards for tips.
2) City developing a robust system to ensure the protection of witnesses.
3) City has developed consistent messaging to citizens as follows: If you see something – say something (Note: This strategy led to the successful capture of someone vandalizing properties along High St.).
Completed to date:

(A): The Portsmouth Police Department has formed a partnership with Virginia Alcoholic Beverage Control Agency (ABC), and City officials to close or bring alcohol/gambling businesses into compliance. This was done through in-person meets, records inspections, undercover operations, and the issuance of Criminal Summons to those not in compliance.

Completed to date:

(B): Multi-jurisdiction task force that targeted catalytic converter thefts resulted in multiple arrests in Portsmouth. Headed by the Portsmouth Police Department’s Property Crimes Unit, 17 arrests were made, and 12 warrants are pending service on other persons involved in this crime. In addition, we were able to identify at least five (5) of our criminals in six (6) cases in Chesapeake, Norfolk, and Suffolk resulting in arrests. With our work with the other cities quite a few of our suspects have been arrested on unrelated gun/drug/and vehicle theft charges.

Completed to date:

(C): The Portsmouth Police Department has recovered 111 weapons and seized 14 from persons and crime scenes around the city. A portion of these weapons were recovered from over 31 vehicles pursuits.

Completed to date:

(D): The Portsmouth Police Department has seized 103 pounds of marijuana; 2,010 grams of heroin; more than five (5) kilos of cocaine; 168 grams of methamphetamine; 28 grams of fentanyl; 28 grams of ketamine, and $223,000 in cash through undercover investigations.

Completed to date:

(E): The Portsmouth Police Department has conducted numerous warrant sweeps resulting in the arrest of several wanted persons. These warrant sweeps will be ongoing.
Completed to date:

(F): The Portsmouth Police Department has handled 25 homicides. Fifty-six percent (56%) have been solved through investigation. Thirteen (13) of the open homicide investigations have strong potential suspects.

Completed to date:

(G): The Portsmouth Police Department has made 64 arrests for gun-related offenses; 38 for aggravated assault, and 23 for brandishing a firearm within the city limits.

Our strategy will only be successful if implemented with the support and hard work of our citizens and community partners. Safety, whether perceived or realized, is a necessary ingredient for a thriving community, and safety is something we all must be involved to ensure crime is reduced in our city.

While not all areas with high poverty are violent, much violence happens in high poverty areas, and given that poverty restricts mobility, violence is difficult to escape. As a result, these areas need more attention in order to break the cycle of violence. Knowing where violence is occurring is itself an opportunity to leverage the data we have and tailor solutions for specific areas.

Survivors of crime can experience long-term negative impacts, including but not limited to fear, isolation, low self-esteem, helplessness, and post-traumatic stress disorder. Further, as violent crime impacts a community, it can become shared by the community, and
become a shared trauma. This shared trauma can hinder generations and become a perpetual cycle of violence and concentrated poverty.

**Roadmap of Continuous Efforts**

The roadmap for safer communities and crime reduction have demonstrated encouraging results when consistently implemented. We will constantly evaluate and expand our strategies to ensure we are achieving desired results.

The Police Department will retool our violence reduction model in the following manner:

- **Quarterly Crime Plans**: Moving from the historical practice of developing summer/seasonal crime plans, each Lieutenant will be tasked to develop and implement quarterly crime plans that are data and intelligence driven, focused on hot spots where crime and violence are most prevalent. Lieutenants will have the flexibility to adjust and tailor crime plans as trends and patterns emerge within districts, but each will be accountable internally.

- **Bi-Monthly Tracking Data**: The PPD will begin tracking and responding to neighborhood crime trends. PPD will continually evaluate the process, as it will serve as the accountability platform for each district.

- **Shooting Review Meetings**: This includes PPD internal stakeholders joined by our local, state, and federal partners reviewing each shooting in a granular way to identify patterns or those individuals who are most likely to be at risk of becoming a victim or perpetrator of crime. This meeting allows the PPD to remove the redundancy and silos that exist and allows us to collectively work towards the same goals with the same information to reduce violence. From these meetings, weekly priorities for staffing and deployment of resources needed for their violence reduction strategies will identified and addressed.
• **Daily Commander Briefings:** Each day, commanders review the major incidents from the previous 24 hours with the goal of going beyond reporting out by creating tasks and action items focused on violence reduction.

• **Call-Ins and Custom Notifications:** With our partners, working from the shooting review data and district level crime strategies, the PPD is identifying individuals for the quarterly ‘Call-In’ sessions. These sessions with law enforcement representatives, community leaders, social service providers, and gang- or group-involved individuals (often on probation or parole) will send a fair and balanced message to those identified through the data driven process. At the Call-In, the law enforcement-community partnership communicates that the violence in the community will not be tolerated; the consequences of continued violence; and offer of help from the community and social service providers for those who accept it. Custom notifications will be held on a case-by-case basis for those individuals who are in immediate danger of becoming a victim or a perpetrator of violence.

By committing ourselves to the performance goals, pillars and a roadmap of continuous efforts outlined in this comprehensive crime reduction plan, we will achieve long-term sustainable change together. Measurable, achievable, and transparent performance goals communicate the expectations of the City to all our stakeholders both internal and external.

Public transparency as we work on these goals, with regular progress reports and opportunities for feedback, builds inclusiveness and trust with the community, whether we succeed or fall short of our action items.
The City of Portsmouth Crime Prevention and Violence Prevention Plan is a living document that will be continually updated and evaluated to ensure its strategies are producing results that are aligned with the City’s priorities.