



Mayor Jim Strickland's

Better Memphis

Public Safety Plan

During his 2015 campaign, Mayor Jim Strickland released a multi-faceted plan to provide for public safety. The following document is in two parts: 1) a summary of his plan and 2) an update into what has been implemented thus far (December 2016).

The Public Safety Plan works in tandem with other administration actions to reduce crime, such as the anti-poverty plan. A summer 2016 update of actions on the anti-poverty plan can be viewed here:

http://memphistn.gov/Portals/0/pdf_forms/BetterMemphisPlan.pdf.

The Better Memphis Public Safety Plan

COMPONENTS

1. Technology, analytics and resources
2. Civilian review and neighborhood outreach
3. Violent crime and accountability
4. Juvenile crime
5. Recidivism

TECHNOLOGY, ANALYTICS AND RESOURCES

Increased use of technology and data analysis has proven to be one of the most effective crime prevention strategies nationwide. In addition, effective management of resources is critical for the Memphis Police Department to operate efficiently and make the best use of its force.

Strategies

- ❑ A 100% commitment to data-driven policing (Blue CRUSH) and analytics to fight crime before it happens.
- ❑ Increased civilian involvement in the police force, including Police Service Technicians.
- ❑ Recruit and retain police officers.
- ❑ Raise awareness of the Memphis/Shelby County Law Enforcement Foundation.

CIVILIAN REVIEW AND NEIGHBORHOOD OUTREACH

Effective law enforcement requires local police departments to foster a positive relationship with their communities based on mutual respect and trust. Law enforcement agencies must be as transparent as possible so that citizens can have faith in the fairness of policies and procedures.

Strategies

- ❑ MPD Internal Affairs must be fully public and transparent.
- ❑ City employees must be required to cooperate with all CLERB investigations.
- ❑ Disciplinary actions taken by the police director must take into account CLERB recommendations.

- ❑ All police shootings should be referred to the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation.
- ❑ Neighborhood outreach programs.
- ❑ Connect MPD to the community through smartphone apps.

VIOLENT CRIME AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Memphians must have a safe environment in which to grow up, obtain an education, raise families and do business. In addition, the ability of citizens to feel safe in their homes and in their communities is vital to maintaining and growing a city's population. The perception of Memphis as an unsafe place to live contributes to population loss as well as hinders efforts to attract outsiders to the city.

Strategies

- ❑ A 100% commitment to Blue CRUSH and analytics to fight crime before it happens.
- ❑ Work with state government to stiffen penalties for violent criminals.
- ❑ Work with state government to make multiple domestic violence offenses felonies rather than misdemeanors.
- ❑ Seek a state law that allows police officers to obtain orders of protection at the scene of domestic violence offenses so victims don't have to go immediately to court to obtain one.
- ❑ Gang prevention.
- ❑ Enforcement of curfew laws.
- ❑ Recruit and retain police officers.
- ❑ Increase awareness of resources for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.
- ❑ Secure funding for testing of all backlogged rape kits.

JUVENILE CRIME

Statistics show that juvenile crime is a significantly larger problem in Memphis than in Tennessee's other most populous cities.

Strategies

- ❑ Target habitual offenders.
- ❑ Advocacy for community/faith-based programs.
- ❑ Gang prevention.

- ❑ Intervene in the lives of young people so they choose the right path.
- ❑ Enforcement of curfew laws.
- ❑ Identification of truant students.
- ❑ Promotion of sports and other after-school activities.
- ❑ Expansion of job training and placement programs for teens.

RECIDIVISM

The criminal justice system cannot simply be a revolving door of the same people coming in and out of prison time and time again. A high rate of recidivism in Memphis translates to a large prison population and growing costs for law enforcement and criminal justice.

Strategies

- ❑ Drug and alcohol recovery, including full utilization of the Shelby County Drug Court.
- ❑ Advocate for mental health treatment for inmates and ex-offenders.
- ❑ Advocate for education/job training for inmates and ex-offenders.
- ❑ Connect released inmates to community resources.
- ❑ Seek additional funding to pay for expungement fees.

December 2016 Update: Action Items

Mayor Jim Strickland and Police Director Michael Rallings have taken action on many crime and public safety items this year, such as:

Retaining/recruiting officers: A recruitment campaign for new officers yielded 2,000-plus applicants this year, compared to about 500 applicants in most years. In November, the administration restored pre-65 retiree health insurance subsidies, a reason often cited for increased attrition in recent years. In April, the administration reached an agreement with the Memphis Police Association that called for pay increases for officers, and those increases were included in the 2016-17 budget. Tuition benefits for officers were also increased, and a Police Officer III rank was created to better compensate veteran patrol officers.

The 'New' Blue C.R.U.S.H.: MPD continues its commitment to data-driven policing – in which a higher number of officers focus on 'hot spots' that show a pattern of criminal activity. Mayor Strickland authorized Director Rallings to do whatever he needed with staffing to make sure as many officers as possible are on the street, and he has made changes accordingly. And on Director Rallings' first day, he promoted seven top brass to stabilize the command staff.

Partnering with the Multi-Agency Gang Unit: In January, MPD partnered with the Multi-Agency Gang Unit to issue an injunction to drive two violent street gangs out of Binghampton. And in April, the MGU was part of an effort that led to indictments of leaders of the Gangster Disciples. In October, the MGU shut down two South Memphis homes as nuisances. The MGU is a partnership with various law enforcement agencies that the city will continue to strengthen.

Bringing back the PSTs: The first cohort of Police Service Technicians joined the force in the summer; they address traffic accidents and other minor incidents. That allows more commissioned officers on the streets to tackle violent crime. The administration and MPD also launched the Blue Path program through Southwest Tennessee Community College to establish a pipeline for PSTs, who can later become officers.

Assigning officers to community centers: At the expiration of MPD's contract with Shelby County Schools, the officers previously assigned to schools were reassigned this summer to community centers in an effort to make those centers safe places.

Improving 911: Through a concerted effort between the administration and MPD, average 911 call answer times have improved by 56 percent -- from 59.7 seconds in December 2015 to 26.4 seconds in October -- in 10 months.

Partnering with outside agencies: The city partnered with the Tennessee Highway Patrol to intensify its traffic patrols on highways. The city also entered into a partnership with the Shelby County Sheriff's Office to add additional officers to the Entertainment District detail at certain times.

SkyCops: Mayor Strickland's administration worked with the Memphis City Council to buy \$407,000 worth of SkyCop cameras through revenue generated from the red-light camera program. The cameras will be placed evenly across the city.

Gun STAT: Targeted gun violence reduction strategies are in place that focus on repeat offenders in high-crime neighborhoods, based on arrests, gang affiliations and probation status.

Body cameras: The administration and MPD have continued the process of rolling out body cameras department-wide, and they are almost completely deployed.

Neighborhood crime prevention: Through the Neighborhood Crime Prevention Grant program in Neighborhood Watch, the city awarded \$88,195 to 36 neighborhood groups to improve crime-fighting efforts in their neighborhoods.

OCU bust: In May, the Organized Crime Unit completed an operation that resulted in 394 felony arrests and 130 guns taken off the streets.

Aligning community-wide priorities: The administration and MPD partnered with wide-ranging Operation Safe Community: III plan to coordinate crime-fighting efforts among other agencies. The OSC plan is focused on making a near-term impact on violent crime.

Youth activities: The city offered 1,440 summer jobs for young people through its two programs, and increased programming at community centers and libraries. Some 8,000 teens attended over 1,300 programs at the Benjamin L. Hooks Central Library in 2016, compared to 5,400 teens attending 370 programs the year prior.

Economic development: Jobs -- and good jobs -- are critical in reducing crime. The administration took the lead on preserving ServiceMaster's 1,200 jobs with its move Downtown, and also found a creative solution to a problem that could've prevented 75 jobs in a new venture on Presidents Island. The city's unemployment rate as of September 2016 was its lowest in nine years.

Memphis Gun Down: Operating in Frayser, South Memphis, Orange Mound and Hickory Hill, the program tackles violent crime in five ways: suppression, community mobilization, youth opportunities, intervention (such as the 901 BLOC squad) and organizational change.

Cleaning records for non-violent offenders: More than \$55,000 was raised this year in support of the Better Memphis Fund, which pays for expungement fees. This allows non-violent offenders to re-enter the workforce. The city's Workforce Investment Network, Office of Community Affairs and Human Resources are helping those who receive the grants to effectively enter the workforce.