



Amherst Police Department Strategic Plan 2013-2017

Agency Goals:
Looking toward the Future

Department Overview

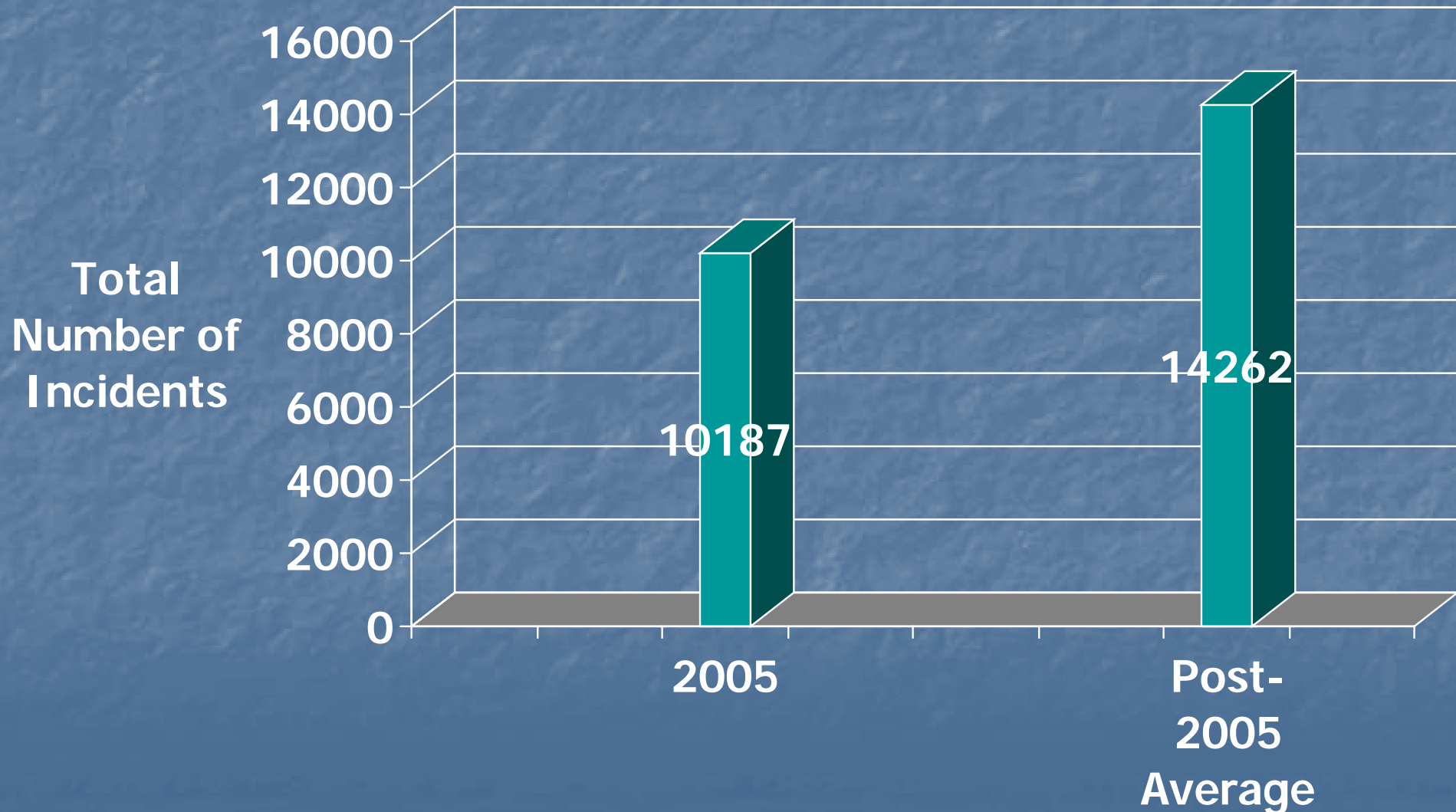
- Department consists of 18 FT officers, and one FT executive assistant
- Two divisions: Support Division, and Operations Division
- Support Division
 - Lieutenant/Prosecutor
 - Supervises detectives
 - Prosecutes all violation and misdemeanor charges in Milford District Court
 - Two Detectives
 - Investigation, presentation of felony cases to Hillsborough County Grand Jury for indictment, and coordinate services to juveniles, victims, and witnesses
 - T.A.R. (Technical Accident Reconstruction) team member
 - Two School Resource Officers (Middle School and Souhegan High School)
 - In place at both schools for almost a decade
 - Police services available on site
 - Building of valuable relationships with students, staff, and parents
 - Frequently host evening training with parents on issues such as internet safety and drug abuse

Department Overview, Cont.

■ Operations Division

- One lieutenant, two sergeants, and nine patrolmen handling:
 - Motor vehicle accidents
 - Security checks of vacant homes, businesses, banks, and schools
 - Response to medical emergencies and natural disasters
 - Traffic enforcement
 - Arresting criminal offenders
 - Checking in on the welfare of elderly or disabled residents
 - ...*performing just about any service that one might imagine*
- Understaffed in comparison with similarly-sized communities
- Staffing issues exacerbated by increased need for police services along Route 101A business district
- Officers forced to spend less time in neighborhoods
- Seeking to hire additional personnel in coming years to ensure adequate and dedicated patrol coverage throughout town

40% Increase in services to Route 101A corridor alone
due to business development since 2005



Community Police Services Provided

- Additional, community-oriented services historically provided by the Amherst Police Department:
 - Good Morning Amherst
 - Property Checks
 - Special House Checks
 - Security Inspections
 - Fingerprinting
 - John T. Osborn Memorial Scholarship
 - D.A.R.E. at the Amherst Middle School

New Community Programs in 2013

- School Safety Checks
- School Book Reading



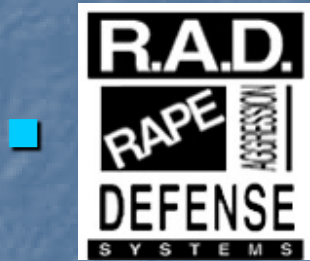
New 2013 Programs, Cont.

- Bike Safety Recognition



**FOR WEARING YOUR HELMET AND BEING A SAFE RIDER
YOU HAVE EARNED ONE FREE ICE CREAM CONE
COMPLIMENTS OF THE AMHERST POLICE DEPT AND TASTEE KONE, LLC
272 ROUTE 101, AMHERST, NH**

New 2013 Programs, Cont.

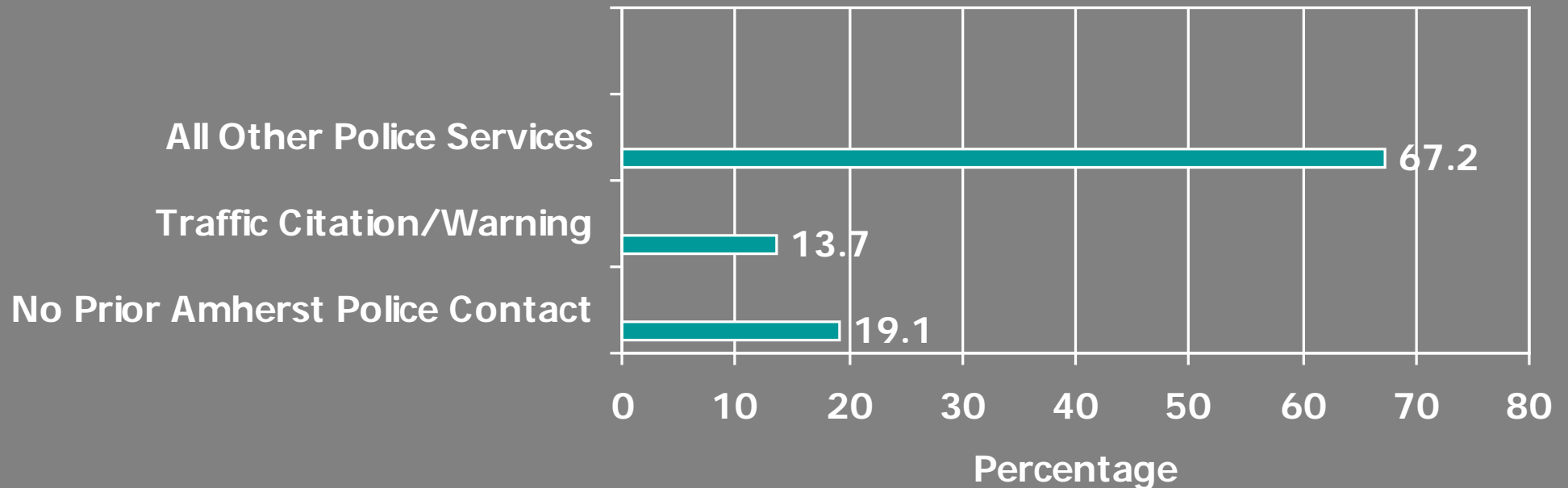


Rape Aggression Defense Training



The Amherst Police Department will continue to implement initiatives in the coming years which help to establish relationships and build partnerships with Amherst's citizens, business owners, and community organizations...

Types of Citizen Contact with the Amherst Police Department



Developing Strategic Goals

- Guidance sought from:
 - Town of Amherst Master Plan
 - Community Survey Results
 - Recognized Best Practices of Police Agencies
 - Areas identified through an internal *S.W.O.T.* assessment of APD *Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats*

Amherst Master Plan Goals: Applied within the APD Strategic Plan

- Master Plan identifies several goal areas for the police department, including:
 - Managing traffic volumes and speeds on local roads
 - New state of the art and more adequate police facility
 - Contributing to an increase in the overall quality of life in town

Citizen Survey of the APD: Incorporating Community Goals

- First ever Amherst PD community survey July 2013
- Feedback solicited from random selection of 300 households in Amherst
- Highlights include:
 - 88% rating of Very Good to Excellent overall police services
 - Foremost safety concern is with property crimes (burglary, theft, etc.)
 - Ranked second are concerns with vandalism, followed closely by concerns with traffic offenses
 - Communication of safety concerns/trends to the public identified as area needing some improvement

Best Police Agency Practices: Establishing a Comparative Base

- Best Practices comparison based upon:
 - Recognized procedures in professional police agencies
 - U.S. Dept. of Justice data and NH municipal comparisons
 - Federal data based on towns with populations of 10,000-24,999
 - NH data based on towns with populations of 10,000-15,000

Internal S.W.O.T Analysis

Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats

■ Strengths

- Employee screening/hiring process, reputation in NHLE community, traffic enforcement, services to schools, community involvement, equipment, general investigation, and overall professionalism

■ Weaknesses

- Lack of clerical support, property room inventory management, aging/inadequate facilities, undercover drug investigation

S.W.O.T., continued

■ Opportunities

- Improve information flow to the community, expand quality of in-service officer training options, continue building media relations, expand community programs, increase officer visibility to help deter property crimes and traffic violations

■ Threats

- Uncertainty of budget/program funding, employee retention, staying abreast of technology curve



GOAL #1: Community Services

*Provide Improved Communication and
Community Services to the Citizens of Amherst*

Initiative: Continue to Develop and Implement Community Survey

- First APD community survey initiated June 2013
- Feedback sought to help identify Department's strengths and areas for improvement
- Well received with thoughtful responses made by participants
- Continued efforts to refine and improve the process toward a wider community base
- *Additional Cost: None*

Initiative: *Improve Department Website*

- Consolidation of Department's independent website with Town's website
- Improvement of overall website to reflect current Department programs and resources
- Develop information delivery mechanism (e.g., crime mapping) to update public on safety concerns/trends in town
- *Additional Cost: None*

Initiative: *Increase Community Programs*

- R.A.D. Self Defense Training for women Program initiated summer 2013
- Number of applicants exceeded available spaces (currently a waiting list)
- Additional male and female programs (e.g., for elderly participants) available
- Purchase training equipment necessary for Department to broaden class offerings and availability to the public
- *Additional Cost: \$4,100 in FY15 only*



GOAL #2

Professional Development

Increase Quality and Level of Officer Training to Maintain Professional Standards and Address Community Concerns

Initiative: Increase In-Service Officer Training Hours

- New Hampshire Police Academy mandate of 8 hours minimum per officer per year
- Current Amherst PD average of 35 hours per officer each year
- Increase yearly average to 40 hours per officer in FY15
- Increased funding required for specialized, off-site training (i.e., not @ NH Police Academy) as training offerings are limited for senior officers
- Additional training in areas such as burglary and fraud investigation which are of particular concern to the community
- *Additional Cost: \$1,500 annually, beginning FY15*

Initiative: *Graduate all Department Command Staff from the Command Training Institute*

- Command Training Program endorsed by New England Association of Chiefs of Police
- Department first line (SGT) and mid-management (LT) supervisors have attended beginning in 2000
- Current budget insufficient to insure timely program completion (i.e., within six months of promotion)
- Backlog of senior staff members due for training due to recent department reorganization
- Results in command staff better trained in overall agency management and community policing
- *Additional Cost: \$3,000 in FY15 only*



GOAL #3 Department Operations

*Improve Department Efficiency and
Patrol Area Coverage*

Initiative: *Increase Full-Time Clerical Staff*

- Current Executive Assistant handles payroll, secretary to Chief, secretary to Prosecutor, records management, IT and software maintenance and support (*including support to Communications Center and Fire Department*)
- Average of comparable LE agencies in NH communities 10,000-15,000 is 2.7 FT clerical positions
- Currently the single greatest operational need
- *Additional Cost: \$75,200 annually, beginning FY15*

Initiative: Improve Property Room Inventory Management

- Both secure and non-secure evidence and property rooms in need of reorganization and inventory reduction
- Prior reliance on auction sales (e.g., for unclaimed bicycles) or nothing at all (i.e., property simply accumulates)
- Compare options and select one of the available bulk police inventory reduction companies (e.g., *propertyroom.com*)
- *Additional Cost: None*

Initiative: *Increase Full-Time Officer Staff*

- Currently 18 FT positions with no additions to Patrol Division since 1998
- Despite population fluctuations, Department @ 1.5 officers per 1000 residents
- Remains below NH and Federal DOJ average of 1.8 officers per 1000 residents
- Department should be at minimum 21.6 FT officers
- Improved officer visibility and increased neighborhood coverage
- *Additional Cost: \$82,500 annually, beginning with one officer in FY15*

Initiative: Participate in NH Drug Task Force

- Multi-jurisdictional unit managed by the Office of NH Attorney General
- Representatives from police departments throughout NH –Amherst has never participated
- Temporary, one-year undercover assignment with DOJ funding provided to offset related OT expenses incurred by Department
- Department currently lacking in undercover drug knowledge/expertise despite recognized need
- Participation in program facilitates priority availability of DTF for assignment to Amherst investigations
- *Additional Cost: None*



GOAL #4
Facilities and
Equipment

Improve Department Facilities and Equipment

Initiative: *Replace Undercover Vehicle*

- Current vehicle used for undercover operations is 14 years old
- Repainted within last two years to inhibit rust, but showing signs of age
- Anticipate mechanical issues and general deterioration to warrant replacement within next few years
- *Additional Cost: \$20,000 in FY16 only (expense not anticipated again until FY26)*

Initiative: *Expand/Renovate Building Facilities*

- Current station built 1980, with renovations in 1996
- Police department occupies roughly 5000 sq. ft.
- Comparable NH police stations average 12,000 sq. ft.
- Current APD accommodations are tight but serviceable
- Addition of FT clerical position will result in loss of victim/witness room, with no further office space remaining at all
- Explore feasibility of EMS/AFD facility merge, freeing up vital space on the first floor for police use
- Alternatively, explore finishing 3rd floor to gain modest, temporary space relief
- *Additional Cost: TBD, beyond FY18*

Budget Impact – FY15 Initiatives

| <u>FY14 Adopted Budget</u> | <u>Projected FY15 Starting Budget</u> | <u>% Increase</u> |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------|
| <i>\$2,186,325</i> | <i>\$2,178,302</i> | <i>- .36%</i> |

| <u>Proposed Initiatives</u> | <u>Cost</u> | <u>Adjusted Budget</u> | <u>% Increase</u> |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|------------------------|-------------------|
| Full Time Clerical | \$74,753 | | |
| New Equipment | \$4,100 | | |
| Training Increases | \$4,500 | | |
| <i>TOTAL:</i> | <i>\$83,353</i> | <i>\$2,261,655</i> | <i>+ 3.45%</i> |

| | | | |
|-------------------|------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Above Three Items | \$83,353 | | |
| Full Time Officer | \$82,375 | | |
| <i>TOTAL:</i> | <i>\$165,728</i> | <i>\$2,344,030</i> | <i>+ 7.21%</i> |

FY15 – FY17 Police

*Projected Budget Comparison

| | <u>FY15</u> | <u>FY16</u> | <u>FY17</u> |
|--------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| <u>Budget:</u> | \$2,344,030 | \$2,439,798 | \$2,557,678 |
| <u>% Increase:</u> | 7.21% | 4.10% | 4.83% |

**Figures include costs for yearly wage increases and all proposed strategic initiatives*



Amherst Public Safety Communications

Strategic Goals

GOAL: *Upgrade Radio Communications Equipment*

- Continue with Phase 1 and 2 of current infrastructure upgrade
- Installation of microwave transmission equipment @ USAF Tracking Station in New Boston
- Simulcast radio upgrade and reprogramming of dispatch consoles
- *Additional Cost: \$11,000 in FY14 only*

GOAL: *Improve telephone caller satisfaction rating*

- Recent community survey showed citizen satisfaction rating of 81% in combined *Very Good* and *Excellent* categories for telephone calls made to the communications (dispatch) center
- Accompanying ratings of 13% *Average* and 6% *Poor*
- Raise caller satisfaction to 86% *Very Good* to *Excellent* on next survey
- *Additional Cost: None*

GOAL: *Develop standard operating procedures (SOP) manual*

- Task-oriented guidelines currently in place for routine communications center operations (e.g., 911 call response protocol)
- No overall policies/procedures manual exists (e.g., personnel practices, administration and management)
- Evaluate model policies from various sources (e.g., International Association of Chiefs of Police) and adapt/develop policies for Amherst communications center
- *Additional Cost: None*

GOAL: *Increase yearly in-service
dispatcher training hours*

- Dispatchers currently average 8 hours per year
- Increase average to 16 hours annual training to better adapt to changing trends/developments in the communications field
- Meet dispatcher certification guidelines for compliance with fire suppression insurance reviews that arise during Insurance Service Office (ISO) evaluations
- *Additional Cost: \$2,000 annually, beginning FY15*

GOAL: *Maintain yearly CRF for long term future communications repairs and upgrades*

- Two known, costly, long term projects on future horizon beyond 2017
- Potential replacement of existing radio tower in 2020 and communications consoles in 2023
- Estimated cost of \$180,000 for these two projects alone
- Partial grant funding likely, but not guaranteed
- Maintain yearly CRF contribution of \$15,000 to cover both unanticipated expenses and long term capital improvement projects, and review yearly to evaluate any need for CFR increases

Budget Impact – FY15 Initiatives

| <u>FY14 Adopted Budget</u> | <u>Projected FY15 Starting Budget</u> | <u>% Increase</u> |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------|
| <i>\$373,797</i> | <i>\$378,493</i> | <i>1.26%</i> |

| <u>Proposed Initiatives</u> | <u>Cost</u> | <u>Adjusted Budget</u> | <u>% Increase</u> |
|-----------------------------|----------------|------------------------|-------------------|
| <u>Training Increase</u> | <i>\$2,000</i> | | |
| <i>TOTAL:</i> | <i>\$2,000</i> | <i>\$380,493</i> | <i>1.79%</i> |

FY15 – FY17 Communications

*Projected Budget Comparison

| | <u>FY15</u> | <u>FY16</u> | <u>FY17</u> |
|--------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| <u>Budget:</u> | <i>\$380,493</i> | <i>\$389,490</i> | <i>\$399,149</i> |
| <u>% Increase:</u> | <i>1.79%</i> | <i>2.36%</i> | <i>2.48%</i> |

**Figures include costs for yearly wage increases and all proposed strategic initiatives*



Town of Amherst POLICE DEPARTMENT

Five Year Calendar

| | <i>FY 14</i> | <i>FY 15</i> | <i>FY 16</i> | <i>FY 17</i> | <i>FY 18</i> |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Goals 1.1-1.3 | | | | | |
| Strengthen Services to the Community | | | | | |
| 1.1 Continue to develop and implement community survey | X | X | X | X | X |
| 1.2 Improve Department website | X | X | X | X | X |
| 1.3 Increase delivery of community programs | | X | | | |
| Goals 2.1-2.2 | | | | | |
| Increase Quality and Level of Officer Training | | | | | |
| 2.1 Increase in-service officer training hours | X | X | | | |
| 2.2 Graduate all Department command staff from Command Training Institute, Roger Williams University | | X | | | |
| Goals 3.1-3.4 | | | | | |
| Improve Internal Department Operations | | | | | |
| 3.1 Increase full-time clerical staff | | X | | | |
| 3.2 Improve property room inventory management | X | | | | |
| 3.3 Increase full-time police officer staff | | | X | | X |
| 3.4 Participate in New Hampshire Attorney General's Drug Task Force | | | | X | |
| Goals 4.1-4.2 | | | | | |
| Improve Facilities and Equipment | | | | | |
| 4.1 Expand and renovate building facilities (i.e., complete feasibility study of emergency medical service relocation) | | | X | | |
| 4.2 Replace undercover vehicle | | | X | | |
| Goals 5.1-5.5 | | | | | |
| Amherst Public Safety Communications Center | | | | | |
| 5.1 Upgrade communications center equipment | X | | | | |
| 5.2 Improve telephone caller satisfaction rating | X | X | X | X | X |
| 5.3 Develop standard operating procedures (SOP) manual | | X | | | |
| 5.4 Increase CRF for long term capital improvements | X | X | X | X | X |
| 5.5 Increase yearly in-service dispatcher training hours | X | X | | | |

Beyond the Strategic Plan...

- Alongside the initiatives contained within this plan, the Department will strive in the coming years to:
 - Strengthen partnerships with Amherst's citizens, businesses, and community organizations
 - Implement procedures to help diminish the level of burglary and related property crimes
 - Reduce traffic collision and injury rates through dedicated traffic enforcement practices
 - Encourage continued program development and collaboration with our schools
 - *And, provide increased overall police visibility throughout our neighborhoods to help deter criminal activity...Keeping Amherst Safe and Secure.*