



# Amherst Police Department Strategic Plan FY14-18

*Annual Review of Goals and Initiatives  
September 22, 2014*

# Introduction

- Strategic planning process implemented one year ago
- First annual review of Police/Communications strategic plan
- Report on status of initiatives scheduled for completion in FY14
- Reassessment of initiatives scheduled for FY15 and beyond in light of relevant trends or developments
- Opportunity to recognize additional initiatives developed independently in FY14 to address specific and emerging issues
- Police Department's strategic plan consisting of four essential goals
- Each goal comprised of two or more initiatives to be implemented across various years





## Goal #1: Community Services

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

*Initiative: Improve Department Website*  
*FY14-18 (no additional cost)*

- Consolidation of APD website with Town website completed in FY14
- Outdated pages updated to reflect accurate and current information
- Several pages added to showcase the wide variety of police services offered and provide important resource information
- Currently developing Facebook page for dispatchers to post public safety related information and updates



*Initiative: Continued Development and Implementation of Community Survey FY14-18 (no additional cost)*

- Department implemented first-ever APD community survey in early FY14
- Helped to provide baseline data for developing strategic goals and initiatives
- Remains an important source of evaluation and feedback
- Survey interval moved to a biennial basis to coincide with start, mid-point, and end/restart of the five year strategic planning cycle (i.e., FY14, FY16 & FY18).

*Initiative: Increase Community Programs*  
*FY15 (no additional cost)*

- Ahead of schedule with implementation in FY14
- Partnership with Amherst Lions and Milford Rotary
- Funds donated to cover Rape Aggression Defense (R.A.D.) training suits
- Department has held five training sessions to date
- General public, as well as specific groups such as female SHS students and Amherst Middle School Staff
- Department's R.A.D. instructor staff increased to three in FY14 (one male, and two female instructors)





## GOAL #2

### Professional Development

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

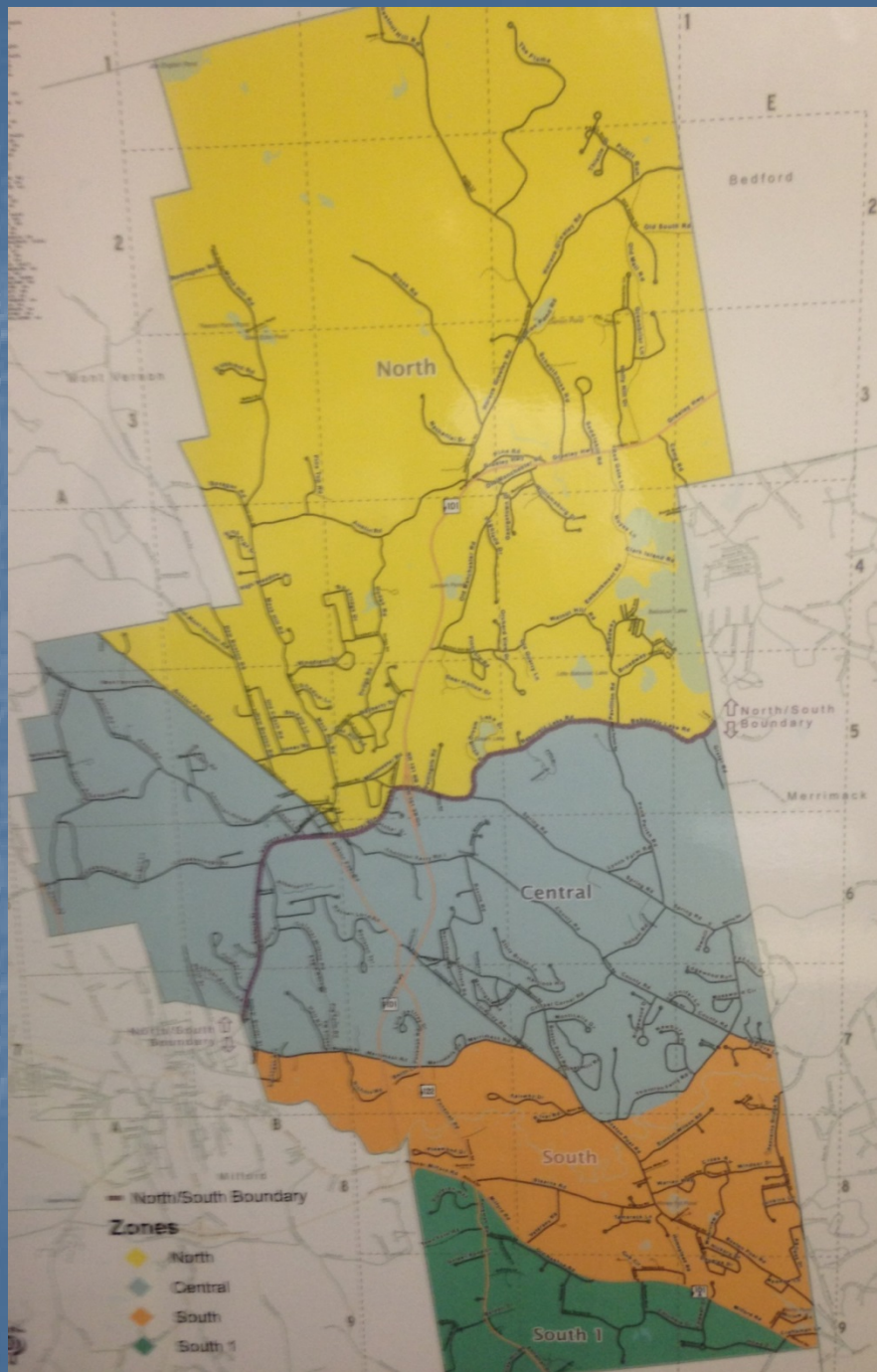
*Initiative:* *Increase In-Service Officer  
Training Hours  
FY15 (\$1,500 annually)*

- Department seeks to provide quality, ongoing training to maintain pace with law enforcement trends and techniques
- Particular focus on community concerns such as fraud and burglary investigation
- Additional funding of \$1,500 provided for FY15
- Funding to be sought annually for continued attention to community concerns and maintenance of professional standards



*Initiative:* *Graduate all Department Command Staff from the Command Training Institute  
FY15 (\$3,000 one-time cost)*

- Command Training Institute – formerly with Babson College and now hosted at Roger Williams University
- Preeminent New England training source for police supervisors
- Backlog of APD senior staff yet to attend
- Funds approved in FY15 to send remaining sergeant and two lieutenants
- Supervisors are currently enrolled at different intervals, and all are due to graduate by October 2014



## GOAL #3: Department Operations

*Improve Department Efficiency and Patrol Area Coverage*



## Initiative:    *Increase Full-Time Clerical Staff FY17 (\$75,500 annually)*

- 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
- Part-time position approved for FY15
- Three months into FY15, improvement already noticed on turnaround time for accident and other reports commonly requested by the public and other parties
- Facilitating more timely compliance with federal crime reporting mandates (tied to federal grant eligibility)
- Full effectiveness to be evaluated in coming months
- Recommendation on potential need for full-time transition to follow at a later date

*Initiative:* *Participate in NH Drug Task Force  
FY18 (no additional cost)*

- Multi-jurisdictional unit managed by the Office of NH Attorney General
- Participation in program facilitates priority availability of DTF for assignment to Amherst investigations
- Recent fluctuation in status and structure of the unit
- Current trend developing toward county vs. statewide units
- Upcoming changes may affect future consideration
- Further review necessary in the next annual strategic plan review



*Initiative: Improve Property Room Inventory Management*  
*FY14 (no additional cost)*

- Major improvements in property and evidence room management completed in FY14
- Overall efficiency improved (e.g., return of lost, found, or seized property)
- Officer in charge attended specific training in property room management in FY14
- Achieved primary goal of maximizing the amount of useable space
- Though serviceable, property rooms remain undersized for the Department's overall needs

*Initiative:* *Increase Full-Time Officer Staff  
FY16 & 18 (\$82,500 per officer  
annually)*

- Currently 18 FT positions with no additions to Patrol Division since 1998
- Well below federal and state average of 21.6 officers for comparably sized communities
- 40% increase in service calls to Route 101A business district alone since 2005
- Department seeking to restructure and improve patrol coverage and increase neighborhood police presence
- Two positions previously proposed for FY15 and 17 have been carried forward to FY16 and 18





## GOAL #4

Facilities and Equipment

*Improve Department Facilities and Equipment*

*Initiative:*     *Replace Undercover Vehicle*  
*FY16 (\$20,000 one-time cost)*

- Aging vehicle to be rotated out and replaced
- Facilitates effective performance of Department's general investigative tasks
- Replacement further warranted amid increased awareness and concerns over distracted drivers
- NH's Hands-Free Electronic Device Law goes into effect July 1, 2015
- 116 fatal NH crashes in last four years (two in Amherst since 2006)
- New vehicle provides improved means to address this and other statutes which are otherwise more difficult to enforce
- Facilitates effective and necessary performance of Department's overall investigative responsibilities



## *Initiative: Expand/Renovate Building Facilities*

- Current station built in 1980, with renovations in 1996
- Police department occupies roughly 5,000 sq. ft. of 10,000 sq. ft. facility
- Comparable NH police agencies averaging 12,000 sq. ft.
- Inadequate size becoming more apparent with time
- Over last year, addition of much needed part-time administrative position resulted in loss of Department's victim assistance room to accommodate another desk
- Work spaces are undersized with no useable space left
- Recent MRI study examining potential Fire/EMS merger and EMS relocation providing potential momentum
- Results will help determine future path of this initiative

# Budget Impact – FY16 Initiatives

<u>FY15 Adopted Budget</u>	<u>Projected FY16 Starting Budget</u>	<u>% Increase</u>
<i>\$2,255,887</i>	<i>\$2,341,018</i>	<i>3.7%</i>

<u>Proposed Initiatives</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Adjusted Budget</u>	<u>% Increase</u>
Full Time Officer	\$82,500		
Undercover Vehicle	\$20,000		
<i>TOTAL:</i>	<i>\$102,500</i>	<i>\$2,443,518</i>	<i>8.3%</i>



# FY16 – FY18 Police

## \*Projected Budget Comparison

	<u>FY16</u>	<u>FY17</u>	<u>FY18</u>
<u>Budget:</u>	\$2,443,518	\$2,555,876	\$2,749,613
<u>% Increase:</u>	8.3%	4.6%	7.6%

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



# Amherst Public Safety Communications Center



# GOAL #1: Upgrade Radio Communications Equipment

*FY14 (one-time cost)*

*\$12,300 in matching funds through CRF*

- Phases I and II of multiyear upgrade effort completed
- Cooperative federal grant initiative between Amherst and Bedford
- Installation of new microwave radio equipment
- Upgrade to simulcast radio dispatching
- MOU with US Air Force Tracking Station in New Boston to utilize 400' radio tower located on federal property
- Improved interoperability with Bedford and surrounding jurisdictions
- Improved radio reception in problem areas, resulting in increased public safety and improved emergency response

*GOAL #2: Improve telephone caller  
satisfaction rating  
FY15-18 (no additional cost)*

- FY14 community survey showed citizen satisfaction rating of 81% in combined *Very Good* and *Excellent* categories for telephone calls made to the Communications (dispatch) Center
- Dispatchers are first point of contact for emergency and other public safety services
- Strong focus on continual quality improvement
- Upcoming FY16 survey will assess potential improvements in overall rating



*GOAL#3: Develop standard operating procedures (SOP) manual  
FY15 (no additional cost)*

- 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)
- Development of manual is currently well underway and scheduled for completion in FY15
- SOP manual to address administrative and personnel policies specific to operation of modern public safety dispatch center

*GOAL #4: Increase yearly in-service  
dispatcher training hours  
FY15 (\$2,000 annually)*

- 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
- Funding approved for FY15 initiative
- Enables Communication Specialists to attend valuable training in the coming months
- Important step toward continued quality improvement and maintaining professional standards



*GOAL #5: Maintain yearly CRF for long term future communications repairs and upgrades FY14-18 (\$15,000 annual warrant article)*

- Voters showed strong support of this initiative for FY15
- CRF helps support major communications repairs during course of the year
- Also drawn upon when matching funds are required for federal communications center grants
- Perhaps most importantly, designed to provide financial security in face of anticipated major expenses
- Potential radio tower replacement in 2020, and radio console replacement in 2023 to reach \$180,000
- Current pace of CRF contributions will insure coverage in event grant funds are not available

# FY16 – FY18 Communications

## \*Projected Budget Comparison

	<u>FY16</u>	<u>FY17</u>	<u>FY18</u>
<u>Budget:</u>	<i>\$389,463</i>	<i>\$405,122</i>	<i>\$421,614</i>
<u>% Increase:</u>	<i>3.8%</i>	<i>4.0%</i>	<i>4.1%</i>

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





## *Special Project Update*

*Police Field Office  
opening at Walmart  
(September/October 2014)*



## Accomplishes Two Primary Goals:

- Increased police visibility at Walmart
- Improved overall police operational efficiency





- Largely in response to growing trend of increasing shoplifting arrest numbers
- 160% increase from 2012 to 2013
- 142 shoplifting arrests in 2013 (54 in 2012)
- Third highest in Hillsborough County for 2013
  - Nashua @ 369
  - Manchester @ 221
  - Hudson @ 59 (ranked 4<sup>th</sup>)



- Provides location for officers to:
  - Book low-risk criminal offenders detained on store property
  - Make follow-up phone calls
  - Hold meetings/interviews
  - Complete reports
  - Take meal breaks
- Eliminates need to return to police headquarters in the center of town
- Allows officers to remain in their assigned patrol area
- Improved efficiency and availability to respond to calls in southern district





A mid-year project  
developed to facilitate  
Strategic Plan Goal #3:

*Improving Department  
Efficiency and Patrol Area  
Coverage*





*Jack Reed*  
*Owner, JBR Associates*

*Mark Reams*  
*Chief, Amherst PD*

*Tony Tiner*  
*Manager, Walmart*