

Amherst Police Department Strategic Plan FY14-18

*Annual Review of Goals and Initiatives
September 14, 2015*

Introduction

- Second annual review of Police/Communications FY14-FY18 strategic plans
- Report on status of initiatives scheduled for completion in FY15
- Reassessment of initiatives scheduled for FY16 and beyond in light of relevant trends or developments
- Police/Communications strategic plans each consisting of four to five essential goals
- Each goal comprised of two or more initiatives to be implemented across various years from FY14 through FY18



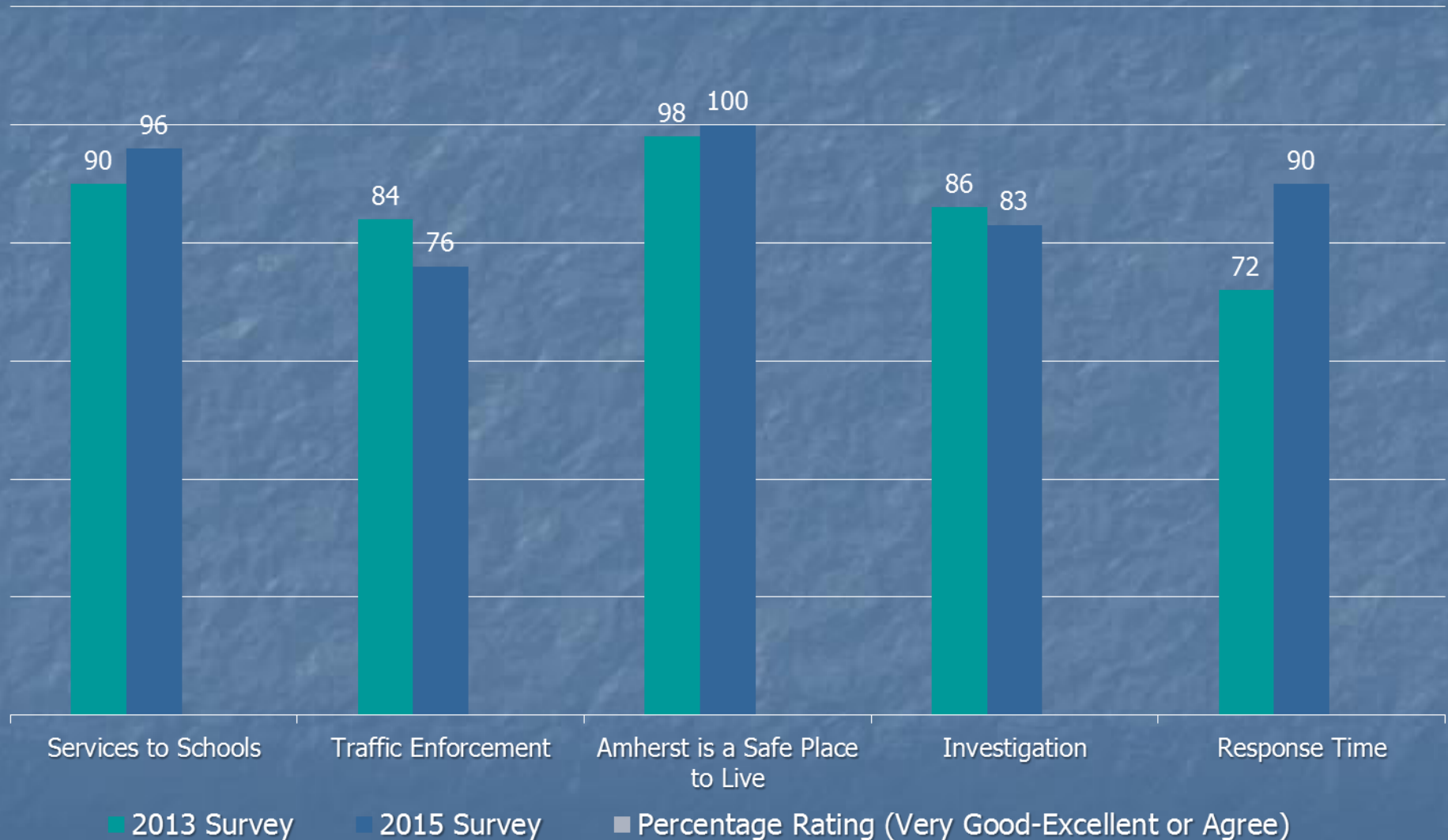
Goal #1: Community Services

Provide Improved Communication and Community Services to the Citizens of Amherst

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

- Department implemented first-ever community survey of agency in August of 2013
- Helped to provide baseline data for evaluating performance and developing strategic goals and initiatives
- Conducted on a biennial basis
- *Second survey completed August of 2015*
- *Remains an important source of feedback and evaluation*
- *2015 survey showed 92% Very Good-Excellent rating for Overall Police Services vs. 88% in 2013*

Examples from 2013-2015 Survey Comparison



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- Outdated pages updated to reflect accurate and current information
- Communication with the public was identified as a growth area in 2013 survey
- *Several pages added in FY15 to showcase the wide variety of police services offered and to provide important resource information on new programs (e.g., Code Yellow mental health response initiative)*
- *50% increase in police webpage content over last 2.5 years*



- *Facebook page developed in FY15 for dispatchers to post public safety related information and updates*
- *2015 survey shows 80% of residents feel informed about public safety concerns vs. 76% in 2013*

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

- Completed ahead of schedule with implementation in FY14
- Largely through partnership with Amherst Lions and Milford Rotary
- Funds donated to cover Rape Aggression Defense (R.A.D.) training suits
- Department has held 10 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 FY15 (one male, and two female instructors)
- *2015 survey shows 86% Very Good-Excellent rating for police Community Involvement vs. 80% in 2013*



GOAL #2 Professional Development

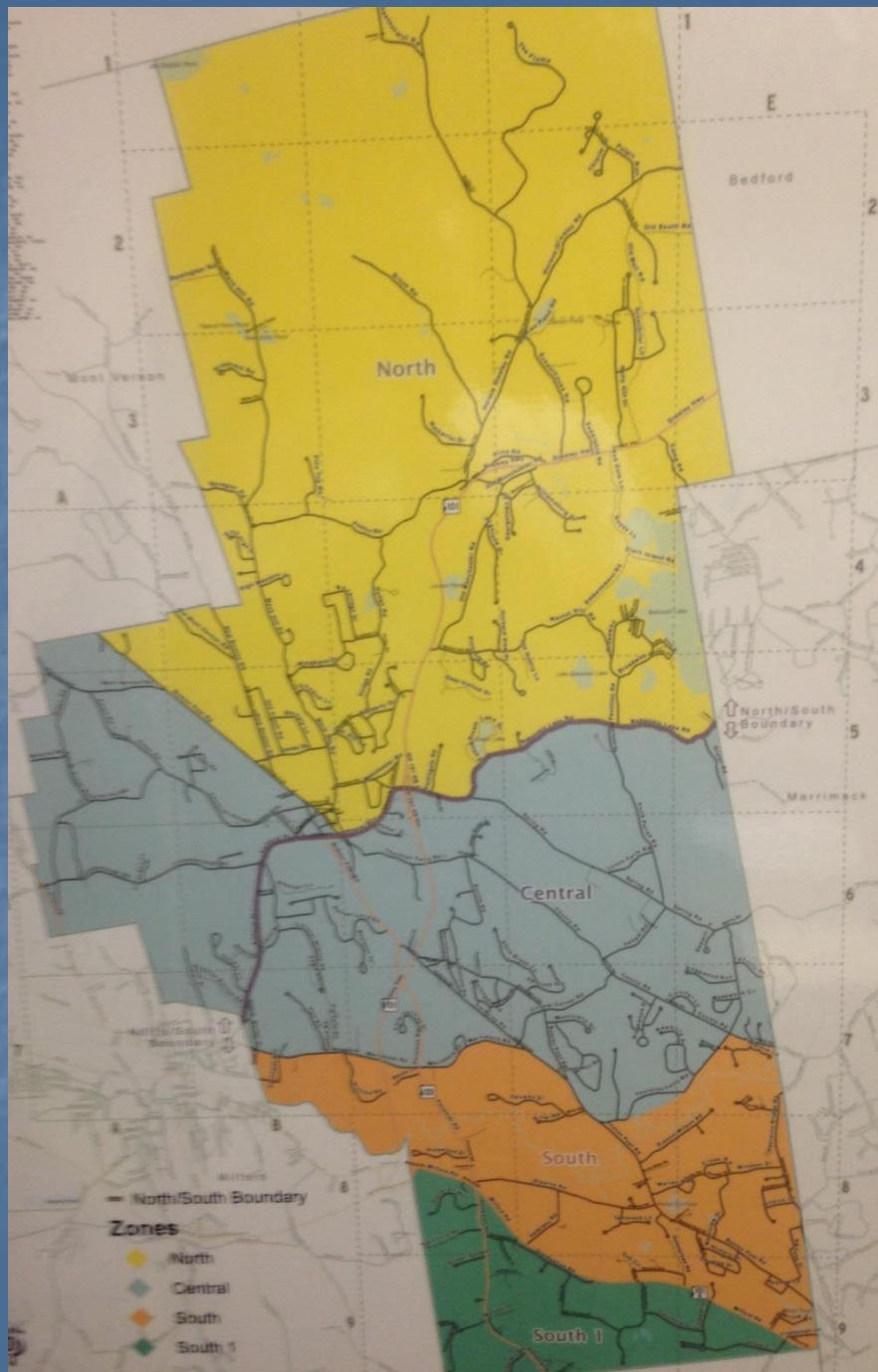
*Increase Quality and Level of Officer Training to
Maintain Professional Standards and Address
Community Concerns*

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
- Previous backlog of APD command staff yet to attend
- Department's command staff comprised of two lieutenants and two sergeants
- Funds approved for FY15 to send remaining sergeant and two lieutenants
- *All three completed training on schedule in FY15*

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
- Additional funding of \$1,500 provided for FY15 and continued into FY16
- Became especially important in FY15 due to recent and unanticipated reductions in funding and training previously available through NH police academy
- *Funding level to be maintained to ensure professional development and quality delivery of services to the community*



GOAL #3: Department Operations

Improve Department Efficiency and Patrol Area Coverage

Initiative: Increase Full-Time Clerical Staff
FY18 (\$72,500 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*)
- Part-time position approved in FY14 and implemented in FY15
- Has resulted in more efficient internal operation and delivery of related services (e.g., maintenance of records and response to data requests)
- Facilitates more timely compliance with federal crime reporting mandates (tied to federal grant eligibility)
- Further administrative assistance still needed in prosecution
- Recommend transition to full-time position in FY18
- Average of comparable LE agencies in NH communities 10,000-15,000 is 2.7 FT clerical positions

*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
- *New Hillsborough County Street Crimes Task Force initiated in FY15*
- *Task force comprised of Amherst, Bedford, Merrimack, Milford, and other Hillsborough County police departments on part-time, as needed basis*
- *Future consideration of NH (state) Drug Task Force dependent upon success/performance of county task force*

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

- Major improvements in property and evidence room management completed in FY14 and continued into FY15
- Overall efficiency improved (e.g., return of lost, found, or seized property)
- Officer in charge attended specific training in property room management in FY14
- Additional officer trained in FY15
- *Currently maximizing the amount of useable space, though Department's property rooms remain vastly undersized for overall needs of the agency*

Initiative: *Increase Full-Time Officer Staff*
FY17 & 19 (\$83,000 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
- Two positions previously proposed for FY14 and FY16 have been carried forward to FY17 and FY19
- Department seeking to restructure and improve patrol coverage and increase neighborhood police presence
- 40% increase in service calls to Route 101A business district alone since 2005, resulting in decreased presence to residential areas
- Recent surveys identified Traffic Offenses and Property Crimes as primary community concerns – both directly related to police presence
- Two sector (North and South), two-car *minimum* patrol model in place for 20+ years
- Three sector (North, Central, and South) three-car model in use but only met 70% of the time with existing staffing level
- *Improvement to three-car minimum coverage model needed*
- *Two additional positions needed for dedicated 100% three-car coverage*



GOAL #4

Facilities and Equipment

Improve Department Facilities and Equipment

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

- Originally slated for FY16
- Board authorized funding ahead of schedule for vehicle acquisition in FY15
- Facilitates effective and necessary performance of Department's overall investigative responsibilities
- *Vehicle put into use immediately on July 1st to assist with enforcement of new Hands Free law and undercover drug investigations underway at that time*

Initiative: Expand/Renovate Building Facilities
FY17 (completion of feasibility study)

- 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/family assistance room to accommodate another desk
- Work spaces are undersized with no useable space left
- Unfinished third floor once hoped to provide potential office space but instead needed to house Department's archive files and miscellaneous supplies
- *Recent merger of Fire/EMS providing potential momentum for Department's acquisition of lower level currently occupied by EMS*

Budget Impact – FY17 Initiatives

<u>FY16 Adopted Budget</u>	<u>Projected FY17 Starting Budget</u>	<u>% Increase</u>
<i>\$2,296,802</i>	<i>\$2,378,536</i>	<i>3.6%</i>

<u>Proposed Initiatives</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Adjusted Budget</u>	<u>% Increase</u>
<i>Full Time Officer</i>	<i>\$83,000</i>	<i>\$2,461,536</i>	<i>7.2%</i>

FY17 – FY19 Police

*Projected Budget Comparison

	<u>FY17</u>	<u>FY18</u>	<u>FY19</u>
<u>Budget:</u>	\$2,461,536	\$2,606,530	\$2,788,962
<u>% Increase:</u>	7.2%	5.9%	6.9%

**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)*

- 2013 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
- Goal to improve customer service and assess in future surveys
- *2015 survey showed an increase in citizen-caller satisfaction rating from 81% to 85% over last two years*

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

- Task-oriented guidelines always been in place for routine Communications Center operations (e.g., 911 call response protocol)
- However, policies/procedures manual never created (e.g., personnel practices, administration and management specific to the Communications Center)
- *Development of manual completed on schedule in FY15*
- *Solidified employee guidelines and expectations, increasing professional operation within Communications Center*

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

- Funding approved for FY15 initiative
- Dispatchers previously averaged 8 hours in-service training per year
- Goal set to increase average annual from 8 hours to 16 hours
- Important step toward continued quality improvement and maintenance of professional standards
- *Average has increased to 16 hours per year to better adapt to changing trends and developments in the communications field*

GOAL #5: Maintain Capital Reserve Fund for major communications repairs and upgrades FY14-18 (\$15,000 annual warrant article)

- Voters showed strong support of this initiative for FY15 and again for FY16
- CRF helps support major communications repairs and equipment replacement during course of the year
- \$30,400 expended in last three years
- Also drawn upon when matching funds are required for federal communications center grants
- Potential radio tower replacement in 2020, and radio console replacement in 2023 to reach \$180,000
- *Current pace of CRF contributions will ensure coverage in event grant funds are not available*

FY17 – FY19 Communications

*Projected Budget Comparison

	<u>FY17</u>	<u>FY18</u>	<u>FY19</u>
<u>Budget:</u>	<i>\$380,987</i>	<i>\$399,970</i>	<i>\$419,498</i>
<u>% Increase:</u>	<i>4.9%</i>	<i>4.9%</i>	<i>4.9%</i>

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