

The BJA Executive Session on

Police Leadership

2013

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Please visit our website, <http://bjaleader.org>, to learn more about this project and to access a broad array of interactive, multimedia resources.

The principals are supported in their work by a team that includes project co-directors Darrel W. Stephens and Bill Geller, project strategist Nancy McKeon, and BJA Senior Policy Advisor Steve Edwards.

Five Police Departments Building Trust and Collaboration

Innovations in Policing Clinic
Yale Law School
Charlotte-Mecklenburg, North Carolina

Full Case

by
Caroline Van Zile



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Trust and Collaboration in Charlotte-Mecklenburg, North Carolina

Caroline Van Zile - In collaboration with members of Yale Law School's Innovations in Policing Clinic

Introduction

For over two decades, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department (CMPD) has worked to build trust and engage in collaboration with all of its residents, including residents of disadvantaged communities. While the department still has room for growth, citizens and civil rights leaders alike report marked improvements in their interactions with the department over the last ten to twenty years. In a southern city where racial tensions run deep, this is no small feat. By measuring what matters, sweating the small stuff, and strengthening transparency and communication, the department has made incremental progress over a series of years and has earned the trust and support of many community leaders. The CMPD has pursued these three initiatives consistently during the tenure of the three separate chiefs of police; in doing so, it has adopted several practices that made community trust and collaboration with disadvantaged communities an integral part of the department's operating procedure.

The story of the CMPD is not the story of a single successful or innovative program that turned the department around. Rather, it is the story of a series of police chiefs who intentionally altered the design and structure of their department to increase community trust and combat crime. These structural changes are replicable, and in Charlotte they have led to enduring change. Moreover, they have allowed the department to continue to experiment and adopt new policing techniques—Community Policing in the 1980s and early 90s, Problem Oriented Policing in the 90s and millennium, and statistics-driven tactics today—while maintaining citizen trust. For Charlotte, consistency has been the key to reform.

What Is Part I crime?

Part I crimes are “serious crimes” as defined by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). Part I crimes include murder and non-negligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson. The FBI collects information on Part I crime trends across cities, states, and the nation and reports these trends in its Uniform Crime Reports. As a result, many cities are very concerned with their Part I crime statistics and tend to focus on these crimes in analysis—often to the detriment of other crimes, like drug trafficking, that may be similarly concerning to disadvantaged communities.

Examining the department's initiatives over the last two decades, three principles emerge that provide a roadmap for any leader looking to replicate the CMPD's efforts: 1) Measure What Matters, 2) Sweat the Small Stuff, and 3) Strengthen Transparency and Communication. After providing some background on the racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic

factors that have made building trust in Charlotte difficult, this case study addresses each principle in turn and provides examples of how the CMPD pursued each strand of its unique philosophy.

In measuring what matters, each CMPD leader over the last two decades has:

- Adopted a mission statement and goals that revolved around trust and collaboration
- Trained and rewarded officers based on these goals, fostering a culture of collaboration
- Used a number of methods to measure progress toward its goals, including UCR Part I crime rates, citizen surveys measuring satisfaction and community concerns, informal polls at community events and meetings, and assessments of the community's response to crime

Using a broad variety of measurement techniques has allowed the department to better communicate with citizens, collaborate with them to address crime trends, and build trust.

In addition to measuring what matters, the CMPD sweats the small stuff. The CMPD has built trust by:

- Working with community members and organizations to address even the smallest signs of disorder or complaints, from trashcans overflowing at bus stops to nuisances like crumbling awnings
- Ensuring that community leaders are equipped to deal with disorder as well
- Guaranteeing that each neighborhood has a leadership group that meets regularly and requiring at least one officer to attend every neighborhood meeting

By sweating the small stuff and attending every leadership meeting, the department fosters trust and collaboration with community leaders.

What Is Community-Oriented Policing?

The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) has defined community policing as follows: "Community policing is a philosophy that promotes organizational strategies, which support the systematic use of partnerships and problem-solving techniques, to proactively address the immediate conditions that give rise to public safety issues such as crime, social disorder, and fear of crime." Community policing centers on three components: community partnerships, organizational transformation to support those partnerships, and proactive and systemic problem-solving exercises. Community policing often centers on contact between officers and community members. To learn more, visit <http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/default.asp?item=36>.

Finally, the CMPD has worked to increase both transparency and communication by:

- Assigning each response area two officers who serve as community coordinators

- Directing coordinators to attend every community meeting in their response area, get to know residents, and follow-up with victims of crime
- Asking these coordinators, along with the lieutenants who lead each response area, to compile newsletters on a monthly basis to keep community members informed regarding both crime trends and local events
- Ensuring the Internal Affairs Division shares its assessment and other pertinent information with the community when police misconduct is suspected or force is used against civilians
- Working with the Community Relations Committee to guide citizens through the complaint process

This level of transparency has made the community more comfortable trusting the department's assessment in tense situations.

None of these tactics are beyond the pale of ordinary police practice. Any department could adopt several of these principles or techniques and improve its relationship with disadvantaged communities. Perhaps what makes Charlotte so special is that it has pursued each of these principles wholeheartedly for a sustained period of time. By adopting specific, routine practices like community newsletters, satisfaction surveys, and officer evaluations based on collaboration and trust building, Charlotte has improved the culture of its department and its relationship with citizens.

Statistics testify to Charlotte's success in building trust and collaboration and increasing community satisfaction. A rough comparison places CMPD ahead of national approval rates, both for the population at large and minority communities. Around 61% of white Americans report having a great deal or quite a lot of confidence in the police, while only 43% of African-Americans report similar levels of confidence.¹ By contrast, 80% of all respondents reported very positive feelings about the CMPD, while 68% responded positively in the minority community.² The numbers for the CMPD are about 20% higher than the national average, and the disparity between whites and minorities in Charlotte is 12% rather than 18%. As of 2010, citizens' ratings of police integrity had increased from previous years,³ and complaints over police misconduct had been decreasing or stable for several years in a row.⁴ Moreover, crime declined 37% between 1991 and 2001, and dropped almost 28% between 2008 and 2010 alone.⁵

¹Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics Online*, (Maguire, Kathleen, ed.), Table 2.12.2011, <http://www.albany.edu/sourcebook/pdf/t2122011.pdf>.

² Appendix G: Annual Survey Results, at 13.

³ *Id.*

⁴ CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG POLICE DEP'T, 2010 INTERNAL AFFAIRS REPORT 13, available at <http://charmeck.org/city/charlotte/CMPD/organization/PoliceChief/InternalAffairs/Documents/2010IA-rpt.pdf>.

⁵ CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG POLICE DEP'T, 2010 ANNUAL REPORT 26-27 (2010), available at <http://charmeck.org/city/charlotte/CMPD/resources/annualrpts/Documents/2010CMPDanlrptb.pdf>.

Origin of the CMPD

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department is unique among its peers, in that the CMPD was created as a new department in 1993 through the merger of the Charlotte and Mecklenburg Police Departments. The department's creation had been in the works for years and was exceptionally well planned. As a result, Chief Dennis Nowicki was able to ingrain a community-centered, collaborative ethic from the start. Both the Charlotte and the Mecklenburg Departments suffered from a history of segregation and oppression, so beginning with a clean slate and a thoughtful approach to disadvantaged communities was key. To learn more, see RYAN L. SUMNER, *IMAGES OF AMERICA: CHARLOTTE AND MECKLENBURG COUNTY POLICE* (2010).

Still, the CMPD is not perfect, and levels of collaboration can always be improved. Charlotte still has lessons it could learn from other departments. Change in Charlotte, for example, has been very police-driven, and collaboration with the community is almost always police-led. In addition, the department currently focuses much of its measurement on Part I crime, while Part II crimes or other disorders—like drug markets—may also be disruptive to the citizens of disadvantaged communities. Also, since the CMPD's approach to collaboration is not a neatly packaged program, it may be harder to replicate than other innovations. While the CMPD's approach may not be ideal for every department, its innovations over the last several years represent a stride forward for a major metropolitan department that was achieved with minimal friction. As a result, they have garnered positive reviews from citizens and have remained in place over time.

Background on Charlotte and Race Relations

Charlotte itself is large and diverse Southern city that benefitted substantially from the economic boom of the 1990s; still, the city remains deeply segregated, and the recent recession has hit Charlotte's poorest neighborhoods hard.⁶ As a city, Charlotte is rife with contradictions. Behind the gleaming towers of the downtown skyline—majestic, modern skyscrapers built by the likes of Bank of America and Wells Fargo—lie tracts of single-family houses with boarded-up windows and queues of homeless men, mostly minorities, waiting in line outside of soup kitchens for lunch. Approaching the city from the southeast, the grand skyscrapers of the New South literally mask Charlotte's most impoverished and segregated neighborhoods.

As a city, Charlotte is still experiencing something of an economic boom, although the profits have been distributed unevenly throughout the city. In the last few years, the population has expanded rapidly, surging by 35% between 2000 and 2010.⁷ As of the 2010 census, Charlotte's population was nearing 750,000.⁸ Historically, Charlotte has been and continues to be a very diverse city: around 45% of the population is white, 35% is black,

⁶ Cf. Bruce Katz & Robert Lang, 3 *Redefining Urban and Suburban America: Evidence from Census 2000*, at 152 n.29 (2006) (noting that, while Charlotte experienced an economic boom in the 1990s, this boom may have left poorer parts of the region behind).

⁷ Charlotte: Quick Facts, U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/37/3712000.html> (last visited Nov. 3, 2011).

⁸ *Id.*

and 13% is Hispanic, with the remainder identifying as Asian or multiracial.⁹ Nearly 14% of the population is foreign-born, and 17% of households speak a language other than English.¹⁰

Who Is Rodney Monroe?

Rodney Monroe has been the Chief of Police in Charlotte since 2008 and has brought a statistics-centered methodology to the CMPD. He is Charlotte's first African-American police chief. According to Charlotte's website, "With more than thirty years experience in law enforcement, Chief Monroe is a recognized innovator and practitioner of community policing. Since joining the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department, he has refocused the department on crime fighting and crime prevention through a more accountable organizational structure, new and advanced technology and a more engaging strategy of community policing." Before coming to Charlotte, Chief Monroe led the Macon, Georgia and Richmond, Virginia police departments. He was also a Washington, D.C. officer and rose through the ranks in that department over the course of 21 years. Community members praise his focus and sense of urgency.

Charlotte is America's seventeenth-largest city and the second-largest banking center.¹¹ For tourists or residents walking around downtown, it is obvious that the banking business dominates Charlotte's economy. Bank of America has several offices around town; and Wells Fargo has taken over yet another mammoth complex in the center of the city. There are 326 Fortune 500 companies in town, and Charlotte is ranked seventh on Fortune 500's list of cities.¹² It is currently number four on Black Enterprise magazine's list of Top Ten cities for African-American families.¹³

In addition to policing Charlotte itself, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department (CMPD) is responsible for patrolling parts of Mecklenburg County.¹⁴ Accordingly, the CMPD's jurisdiction, which encompasses all of Charlotte and a portion of Mecklenburg, includes 778,958 total residents and covers 438 square miles of territory.¹⁵ As of 2010, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department had 1,757 sworn officers and employed 564 civilians.¹⁶ Like most departments, the vast majority of officers (87%) are male.¹⁷ In terms of ethnic diversity, 77% of officers are white; 17% are black; 3% are Hispanic; and 2% are Asian.¹⁸ Given the city's diversity, these statistics are surprising. The current

⁹ *Id.*

¹⁰ *Id.*

¹¹ ANDREA SCHNEIDER, OFFICE OF COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING SERVICES, U.S. DEP'T OF JUSTICE, COMMUNITY POLICING IN ACTION: A PRACTITIONER'S EYE VIEW OF ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE 24 (2003).

¹² CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG POLICE DEP'T, *supra* note 5, at 2.

¹³ *Id.*

¹⁴ *Id.*

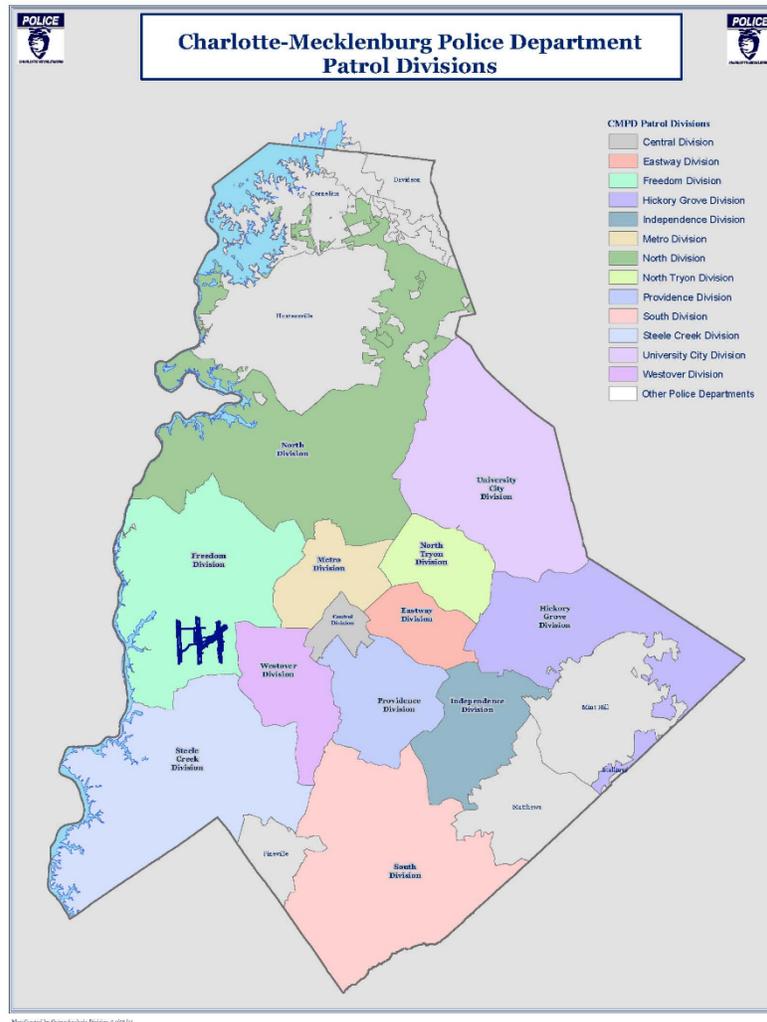
¹⁵ *Id.*

¹⁶ *Id.*

¹⁷ See E-mail from Paul Paskoff, Unit Leader, Planning and Research Division, to Caroline Van Zile, Student, Yale Law School (Jan. 31, 2012, 11:21 EST) (on file with author).

¹⁸ *Id.*

chief, Rodney D. Monroe, is an African-American male and is the first black chief of police the city of Charlotte has ever employed.¹⁹



Currently, authors studying residential desegregation describe the city as “sharply divided.”²⁰ The upscale, white neighborhoods lie to the southeast in Myers Park, Eastover, and Foxcroft, while the poor, largely black neighborhoods tend to be clustered in the northwest in Biddleville, Washington Heights, and University Park.²¹ The two tracts are divided by middle-class and blue-collar white neighborhoods.²² Despite talk of successful integration in schooling, residential segregation increased dramatically during the civil

¹⁹ *Chief of Police*, CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG POLICE DEPARTMENT, <http://charmeck.org/city/charlotte/CMPD/organization/PoliceChief/Pages/default.aspx> (last visited Apr. 8, 2012).

²⁰ Elise C. Richards, *Desegregation Diluted: Integration Under the Busing Order in Charlotte, North Carolina, 1965-2001*, at 2 (unpublished thesis, Duke University 2002) (on file with author).

²¹ *Id.*

²² *Id.*

rights era.²³ According to the Community Building Initiative, which attempts to increase racial harmony in the Queen City, “The Charlotte region ranked 39th out of 40 in ‘inter-racial trust’ among the 40 communities surveyed in the 2000 Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey.”²⁴

The findings of the Benchmark Survey highlighted how inter-racial trust remains a serious issue in Charlotte. Charlotte not only ranked below the national sample in terms of its level of inter-racial trust, it also ranked below other North Carolina cities like Greensboro and Winston-Salem.²⁵ According to the authors of Charlotte’s survey analysis, this was not due to school busing—since other adjacent busing counties had even worse scores on the inter-racial trust metric²⁶—rather, the “lack of social and racial trust may be firmly rooted in [Charlotte’s] history.”²⁷ According to Charlotte researchers:

How Whites treated Blacks in the South—slavery, sharecroppers, and Jim Crow restrictions—is the legacy that we all live with and while conditions are much better, we all know the legacy continues. In this kind of situation, the building of social capital across racial groups was all but impossible. It is easier to do so now, but interaction and involvement continues to be restrained.²⁸

This general lack of trust can create obstacles for a majority-white police department where much of the city’s policing activity happens in low-income, minority neighborhoods.

Although the economic boom in the 1990s benefitted African-Americans as well as whites, a recent study by the UNC Charlotte Urban Institute confirmed that blacks in the city were still faring worse than whites in terms of education and earnings.²⁹ In 2002, the rate of poverty for African-Americans was 25%, twice that of whites.³⁰ Black residents were also more likely to live in areas where property values were low or in substandard housing with overcrowding and inadequate plumbing or kitchen facilities.³¹ Touring the city, the disparities are obvious and stark. A walk through Meyers Park, for example, yields vista after vista of leafy green trees, majestic brick houses, manicured lawns, and white faces. In posh neighborhoods like Meyers Park, citizens worry when they see a South Division police officer patrolling the neighborhood, looking for crime.³² By contrast, in University Park or Biddleville, the awnings of houses often seem to be caving in and plywood planks cover the doors and windows of abandoned properties. Homeless

²³ See Katie Ashworth Chamblee, *Desegregation Diluted: Integration Under the Busing Order in Charlotte, North Carolina, 1965-2001*, at 43-72 (unpublished thesis, Swarthmore College 2007) (on file with author).

²⁴ *Race & Community*, COMMUNITY BUILDING INITIATIVE, <http://www.communitybuildinginitiative.org/default.aspx?cbi=76> (last visited Dec. 15, 2011).

²⁵ BETTY CHAFIN RASH & BILL MCCOY, *SOCIAL CAPITAL BENCHMARK SURVEY EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FOR CHARLOTTE REGION 25* (Feb. 28, 2001).

²⁶ *Id.*

²⁷ *Id.* at 26.

²⁸ *Id.*

²⁹ UNC CHARLOTTE URBAN INST., *THE STATE OF AFRICAN AMERICANS & HISPANICS/LATINOS IN THE CHARLOTTE REGION 8* (Cheryl Ramsaur Roberts ed., 2003).

³⁰ *Id.*

³¹ *Id.*

³² Interview with Anonymous Police Officer, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Dep’t (Jan. 20, 2012).

persons roam the main thoroughfares and congregate in warehouses and camps. Property owners are used to seeing the Metro Division officers circling the streets, and feel less safe when cars are nowhere to be found.³³ Almost every one of the residents in University Park and Biddleville is black.

While Charlotte has been attempting to alleviate racial tensions between whites and blacks for some time, the city has recently experienced an unexpected increase in its Latino population, which added a further layer of complexity to the city's race relations. Between 1990 and 2000, Charlotte experienced a 614% increase in its Latino population.³⁴ This increase has largely been precipitated by immigration. Charlotte's Latino population is similarly disadvantaged relative to the average Charlotte white—like the African-American population in Charlotte, Latinos are on average less wealthy and less educated than whites.³⁵ The growing immigrant population also has its own unique reasons to distrust the police. Differences in language and culture can erect barriers and precipitate misunderstandings.³⁶ Where immigrants are accustomed to police corruption in their country of origin that mistrust may transfer to the local police.³⁷ Moreover, if and when immigrants come to associate arrest or even police contact with deportation, mistrust is bound to surface and collaboration becomes unlikely.³⁸ Although the researchers who compiled the Social Capital Benchmark Survey highlighted the lack of trust between blacks and whites, they actually predicted that lack of social capital and trust in the Hispanic community would be Charlotte's largest obstacle in the future, since the Hispanic community was rapidly expanding and since its level of social capital was shockingly low.³⁹

Who Is Dennis Nowicki?

Dennis Nowicki was the Chief of Police in Charlotte in the 1990s. He introduced community policing to the CMPD. According to the Independent Monitor, Mr. Nowicki's "career spans over thirty-five years of public service. Retiring as Chief of Police for Charlotte-Mecklenburg, North Carolina in 1999, Mr. Nowicki has also served as Chief of Police for Joliet, Illinois, Executive Director of the Illinois Criminal Justice Authority, and twenty-six years with the Chicago Police Department, attaining the rank of Deputy Superintendent. Since retiring from Charlotte-Mecklenburg, he has concentrated his work on assisting police departments and DOJ in matters relating to managing police use of force."

³³ *Id.*

³⁴ CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG POLICE DEP'T, HISPANIC ROBBERY INITIATIVE: REDUCING ROBBERY VICTIMIZATION AND INCREASING TRUST OF POLICE AND FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS IN A HISPANIC COMMUNITY 1 (2002).

³⁵ UNC CHARLOTTE URBAN INST., *supra* note **Error! Bookmark not defined.**, at 8-9.

³⁶ CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG POLICE DEP'T, *supra* note **Error! Bookmark not defined.**, at 1-2.

³⁷ *Id.*

³⁸ *Id.*

³⁹ *See* RASH & MCCOY, *supra* note 25, at 26.

Tensions Come to a Boiling Point

Although the department claims that Charlotte's focus on trust and collaboration wasn't prompted by any particular incident,⁴⁰ the relationship between the majority-white police department and the low-income, minority communities they frequently patrol was certainly strained in the 1990s, when collaborative policing first began to build momentum in Charlotte. In fact, a series of police shootings involving white officers and black residents in the mid-1990s nearly brought the city to a boiling point. Dianne English, who ran Mecklenburg Ministries in the 1990s, recalls what a tinderbox Charlotte had become at that time. "It was the closest we ever came to race riots.... There was a lot of stuff in the ground, toxic waste that needed to be taken care of."⁴¹ Between the changing demographics of the city, the transition from Jim Crow to the New South, and an ongoing challenge to Charlotte schools' integration scheme, racial tension in Charlotte was at a peak.⁴²

What Is Community-Problem Oriented Policing?

Charlotte used a very particular, data- and observation-driven model to identify recurring problems and address them by collaborating with the community under Stephen's regime. This method was called "community-problem oriented policing." After identifying the root cause of the crime, officers in each department would brainstorm solutions and identify potential community partners. After the intervention, results would be measured and the process repeated. This method was combined with traditional community policing to produce Charlotte's unique operating method.

Then, on November 19, 1996, a white police officer shot and killed an unarmed 19-year-old black boy during a routine traffic stop.⁴³ The police officer, Michael Marlow, thought that James Willie Cooper was reaching into his car to get a gun.⁴⁴ In fact, he was reaching for his four-year-old daughter, whom Marlow did not see in the car.⁴⁵ When the city's white district attorney decided not to charge Officer Marlow with excessive use of force, some leaders in the black community rallied, urging black residents to boycott white businesses in protest.⁴⁶ The incident had opened old wounds from a previous incident a few years earlier, when a black woman, Windy Thompson, had similarly been shot during a traffic stop and the white officer had similarly not been charged.⁴⁷ Some leaders in

⁴⁰ See Telephone Interview with Darrel Stephens, former Chief of Police, Charlotte Police Dep't (Nov. 22, 2011) ("The police – Charlotte never had the riots that some other cities did. . . . What you had more was a sense that the department – they were just policing like most police departments police around the country.").

⁴¹ Interview with Dianne English, Executive Director, Community Building Initiative (Jan. 20, 2012).

⁴² *Id.*

⁴³ See Mary Elizabeth DeAngelis, *Searching for Answers: Police Chief Promises Full, Open Probe of Shooting Death*, CHARLOTTE OBSERVER, Nov. 21, 1996, at A1.

⁴⁴ *Id.*

⁴⁵ *Id.*

⁴⁶ Associated Press, *Charlotte Boycott Call Splits City*, THE POST & COURIER (Charleston, S.C.), Jan. 2, 1997, at 4-B.

⁴⁷ DeAngelis, *supra* note 43, at 20A.

the African-American community, however, encouraged a more staid approach.⁴⁸ Understanding that the city was in trouble—and that the police department in particular was in a bad place—the Mecklenburg Board of County Commissioners and the Charlotte City Council launched a Community Building Task Force to collaboratively address issues of racial tension in the city.⁴⁹

While the Task Force was being convened, another shooting occurred. Carolyn Sue Boetticher, a 48-year-old unarmed black woman, was killed when two white officers riddled her car with bullets after it fled from a license checkpoint.⁵⁰ Dismayed at the destruction that racial misunderstanding seemed to be causing, the community rallied around "Something Has Begun," a landmark civic engagement event organized by the Community Building Task Force. The event drew over 600 residents in December 1997, as the city came together to rethink race's role in the Charlotte education system, economy, and particularly in the police department.⁵¹ While police leadership rightly points out that community policing in Charlotte evolved slowly and was not the result of any one event, these shootings in the mid-90s showed the city that trust was a major issue between the city's black residents and its mostly-white police force. It also prompted the city to think deeply about the kind of leadership the CMPD would need in the future, when then-Chief Dennis Nowicki would retire.⁵²

What Is CompStat?

According to Police Chief Magazine, CompStat is a system where police "collect, analyze, and map crime data and other essential police performance measures on a regular basis, and hold police managers accountable for their performance as measured by these data." Accountability and analysis are often linked to large, semi-public meetings. To read more, visit <http://www.policchiefmagazine.org>.

Not only was trust a problem for Charlotte two decades ago—so was crime. Like most cities in the 1990s, Charlotte had a crime problem.⁵³ This problem had grown in the 1970s and 1980s and had concentrated in low-income, minority neighborhoods.⁵⁴ While the officers interviewed did not openly refer to race or class when identifying the "problem" that prompted their foray into community-oriented policing, Charlotte's first major

⁴⁸ Associated Press, *supra* note 46, at 4-B.

⁴⁹ See *History of CBI*, COMMUNITY BUILDING INITIATIVE, <http://www.communitybuildinginitiative.org/default.aspx?cbi=73> (last visited Apr. 8, 2012).

⁵⁰ See Kathleen McClain & Chip Wilson, *Chief Defends Right To Fire*, CHARLOTTE OBSERVER, Apr. 10, 1997, at A1.

⁵¹ *History of CBI*, *supra* note **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

⁵² Interview with Dianne English, *supra* note 41.

⁵³ ELIZABETH KNEEBONE & STEVEN RAPHAEL, BROOKINGS INST., CITY AND SUBURBAN CRIME TRENDS IN METROPOLITAN AMERICA 15 (2011); Op Ed., *Applaud CMPD Role in Crime Rate Decline*, CHARLOTTE OBSERVER, Oct. 24, 2011, <http://www.charlotteobserver.com/2011/10/24/2717823/applaud-cmpd-role-in-crime-rate.html>.

⁵⁴ See *id.*

community-oriented initiative was pointedly undertaken in a low-income, African-American neighborhood where calls for service were disproportionately high.⁵⁵ Not only did high-profile shootings damage trust in Charlotte, but routine crime also undermined faith in the police and created fear and frustration.

Building Bonds through Measurement, Responsiveness, and Transparency

Over the last two decades, three CMPD police chiefs have undertaken the task of building bonds with citizens in disadvantaged communities. Under Chief Dennis Nowicki, the department adopted a community-oriented policing approach in the 1990s, partnering with community organizations and homeowners to reduce disorder in neighborhoods.⁵⁶ Under Chief Darrel Stephens, who led the CMPD from 1999 to 2008, the department adopted a community-problem oriented policing approach, which utilized community resources to address particular “problems” or crime trends.⁵⁷ The present chief, Rodney Monroe, is using many of the same problem-solving and community-partnership mechanisms adopted by Stephens, but has incorporated more data from the CompStat computerized crime system in each patrol division’s crime analysis and response plans.⁵⁸

Who Is Darrel Stephens?

Darrel Stephens is widely regarded as one of the most innovative and respected police leaders in his generation. Chief of the CMPD from 1999 to 2008, he brought with him years of experience from his time as Chief of Police in St. Petersburg, Florida; Executive Director of the Police Executive Research Forum; Chief of Police for Newport News, Virginia; Chief of Police for Largo, Florida; and Assistant Chief of Police for Lawrence, Kansas, where he rose through the ranks from officer to commander. Stephens’s philosophy is highly community-centered. He is also an advocate of problem-oriented policing, a method of operating wherein the police set aside time for both the analysis of statistics and other data and undertaking problem-solving projects based on that analysis.

Despite their different philosophies, each of these leaders took concrete steps to build trust and collaboration into the department’s operating procedure. Analyzing these steps, each effort falls into one of three categories. First, the department has always been dedicated to **measuring what matters**. The CMPD routinely evaluates how well it is serving the community and how successful officers are at collaborating with community members. Second, the department **sweats the small stuff**. It has proven itself reliable and

⁵⁵ See BILL GELLER & LISA BELSKY, OFFICE OF COMTY. ORIENTED POLICING SERVS., U.S. DEP’T OF JUSTICE, A POLICYMAKER’S GUIDE TO BUILDING OUR WAY OUT OF CRIME 33-35 (2009) (detailing Charlotte’s efforts in Genesis Park),; *see also* JAMES T. JORDAN & EDWARD F. DAVIS III, CMTY. SAFETY INITIATIVE, CRIME-FIGHTING PARTNERSHIPS: HOW TO LEVERAGE THE CAPACITY OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPERS (2005) (describing Charlotte’s early community policing efforts in low-income, minority housing projects).

⁵⁶ GELLER & BELSKY, *supra* note **Error! Bookmark not defined.**, at 33-35.

⁵⁷ *See generally* Darrel W. Stephens, Community Problem Oriented Policing: The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Experience (2003) (unpublished manuscript) (on file with author) (describing Stephens’s approach).

⁵⁸ *See Chief of Police*, *supra* note **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

trustworthy to community members, from getting rid of trash to getting rid of neighborhood disorder. Finally, the department has increased its **transparency and communication** with community members over the last two decades. From monthly bulletins to honest updates on police use of force, this transparency has helped the community to trust officers and leadership alike. A department modeling itself after Charlotte could adopt any or all of these tactics.

Measuring What Matters

For the CMPD, measuring what matters in terms of trust and collaboration has taken several forms. It begins with mission and goal setting: every few years, the Chief, the Deputy Chiefs, and others come together and formulate a strategic plan that incorporates collaboration and trust building. The department also comes together periodically on a retreat where they take stock of their progress and re-focus on these goals. Officers are trained with this mission in mind, and their evaluations take these goals into account. The CMPD assesses its overall progress in multiple ways. In addition to grilling lieutenants about their community relationships in CompStat meetings, the CMPD runs a detailed survey every year to measure community satisfaction and obtain feedback. They also undertake more creative assessment efforts, by testing neighborhoods to see if they feel comfortable summoning the police and by conducting informal assessments at community meetings. Together, these efforts allow the CMPD to keep track of levels of trust and collaboration and to adjust course when community support is flagging.

Mission and Goal Setting

In his writing, former CMPD Chief Darrel Stephens emphasizes the vital importance of focusing on a community-centered mission statement and setting big goals for a department. He is very concerned with what he called “consistency in organizational direction.”⁵⁹ When he took over the CMPD, he retained former-Chief Nowicki’s mission statement and core values, which promise: “The CMPD will build **problem-solving partnerships** with our citizens to prevent the next crime and enhance the **quality of life** throughout our community, always treating people with **fairness and respect**.”⁶⁰ He also ensured that these values were reflected in the city’s balanced scorecard, by which the police department is evaluated.⁶¹ The focus on quality of life and partnerships was laser-like, both at the department and city level.

At the city level, the commissioners and Stephens agreed that the CMPD would be evaluated around its ability to reduce crime, increase perceptions of safety, and to strengthen neighborhoods.⁶² Under Stephen’s regime, then, the focus was not only on bringing down crime rates, but on ensuring that the crimes citizens perceived—like drugs, loitering, and nuisances—were given priority focus.

Each of these main objectives was then broken down into measurable goals. For example, reducing crime might have been broken down into “decrease crime in areas identified as

⁵⁹ Stephens, *supra* note **Error! Bookmark not defined.**, at 4.

⁶⁰ *Id.* (emphasis in original).

⁶¹ *Id.* at 5-6.

⁶² *Id.*

chronic hot spots,” “reduce repeat calls for service in high repeat call locations,” and “reduce the incidence of domestic violence in neighborhoods with a high incidence of DV calls.”⁶³ Rather than simply following the traditional CompStat framework, which looks almost exclusively at trends in Part I crime, Stephens would select areas of community concern and measure trends in those areas as well. Setting these tailored goals was an important part of his process.

This macro-level focus on trust continues today as well. The department’s most recent four-year strategic plan listed the following three main goals for 2008-12:

1. Develop enforcement strategies and align police resources to reduce crime at the neighborhood level
2. Strengthen partnerships, both with the community and with strategic partners in crime reduction and prevention
3. Build trust and confidence in the community through diversity⁶⁴

The second priority, strengthening partnerships to reduce crime, homes in on the idea of collaboration, while the emphasis on diversity stems from community feedback regarding trust. Both women and communities of color indicated that gender and racial diversity in the police force were important to them, so the department has been aiming to recruit more voices that reflect the community’s composition and concerns.⁶⁵

Each of these over-arching priorities is then broken down into several initiatives that contain measurable objectives. For example, one of the initiatives listed under strengthening partnerships is as follows:

Initiative 1: Develop and/or strengthen partnerships with a wide variety of partners in order to accomplish mutually established goals

- Objective 1:** Identify key partnerships and designate a departmental champion for each partnership
- Objective 2:** Identify and define joint priorities and goals for each major partnership
- Objective 3:** Develop strategies to accomplish partnership priorities that include sharing of resources and measurable objectives to determine whether the partnership is meeting the needs of the participating agencies and the community
- Objective 4:** Where applicable, enter into formalized partnership agreements with other agencies⁶⁶

⁶³ *Id.* at 7.

⁶⁴ Appendix B, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department Strategic Plan 2008-2012, at 1 (2008).

⁶⁵ Appendix G, Market Wise, 2011 Citizen Survey: Final Report 15.

⁶⁶ Appendix B, at 6-7.

Different leaders within the department are then tasked with pursuing each of these objectives. In this way, the CMPD ensure that its goals are more than merely hortatory. This has proven important in terms of community initiatives, as goals like “build trust” or “increase collaboration” can be difficult to measure.

Training with the Community in Mind

After focusing on messaging the mission, then-Chief Stephens continued to create a cultural shift in the department by re-engineering department training to include techniques that would build trust and collaboration with the community; Chief Monroe has continued using many of these same tools. To graduate from the academy, each trainee has to complete a problem-solving project and make a presentation on a proposed intervention.⁶⁷ The trainees note important demographic trends in the neighborhood, analyze crime statistics, and identify community partners that the department could work with to reduce crime.⁶⁸

For example, in an analysis of Charlotte’s Elizabeth neighborhood, one trainee notes that the neighborhood is disproportionately likely to suffer from property crimes.⁶⁹ The trainee then proposes working with the community to reduce the opportunities available for property crime, claiming, “Word is the most powerful tool” and noting that citizens “play a main role in crime prevention.”⁷⁰ The trainee also digs into the structure of the Elizabeth Community Association and proposes multiple contacts to approach in collaborative or information-sharing efforts.⁷¹ He also proposes undertaking more knock and talks—where officers stop by houses and chat with residents about crime in the neighborhood—and zone checks, where an officer spends a block of time talking to a business owner about crime or getting to know a particular section of the neighborhood.⁷² The full presentation is reprinted in the appendix. Even as the recruits are first socialized to policing, they are taught that their job is not to be John Wayne; they are not loners or experts who operate above the community, but rather they are partners who function on the same problem-solving level as residents. Collaboration is part of the CMPD’s operating method from the recruit’s first day on the job.

The CMPD’s training is by no means perfect; much of recruits’ time is still taken up with exercises from the state’s required curriculum, which has almost nothing to do with trust and collaboration.⁷³ Still, Stephens worked to emphasize collaboration from the start, and both he and Chief Monroe continued this emphasis in their promotion and evaluation strategies.

⁶⁷ See Appendix C, Neighborhood Presentation (Training).

⁶⁸ *Id.*

⁶⁹ *Id.* at 12.

⁷⁰ *Id.* at 17.

⁷¹ *Id.* at 11.

⁷² *Id.* at 16.

⁷³ Interview with Danny Hernandez, Detective, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Dep’t (Jan. 20, 2012).

Officer Evaluation & Promotion

In his academic writing, former-Chief Stephens consistently emphasizes measuring what matters. “What gets measured,” he opines, “is what gets done.”⁷⁴ According to this philosophy, the Chief revised the department’s evaluation, promotion, and rewards system; it remains similar to this day. Officers are evaluated on a quarterly basis based, in part, on whether they “participate[d] in community meetings and events” and “encourage[d] residents to become active in police-community partnerships.”⁷⁵ They are also evaluated on their ability to “work with citizens,” use the department’s problem-solving model, and provide citizens with referrals to other agencies or services.⁷⁶ An example of this evaluation form is included in the appendix. Officers were also required to attend and participate in monthly problem-solving briefings under Stephens, in which the community also sometimes participated, depending on the topic.⁷⁷ In this way, Stephens would ensure that officers were collaborating with the community to solve pressing problems. An alternative method of “measurement,” these ensured that divisions were collaborating with businesses and community groups to address crime trends that concerned them.

In addition, the department gives out annual awards for community-oriented work, dubbed the “Chief’s Award for Excellence in Policing,” which are published every year in its Annual Report.⁷⁸ The Chief’s Unit Citation is also issued to the unit that has done the most diligent collaborative, problem-solving work.⁷⁹ These rewards reflect Chief Stephens’s and Chief Monroe’s attitude toward promotion. Commitment to the community and to collaborative problem solving is taken into account when management positions are filled. According to Chief Stephens:

When I left, 75% of the [CMPD], this was the philosophy they came into. We would refocus on it every few years on our retreats. There wasn’t anyone when I left above the rank of captain who I hadn’t promoted – and their philosophy of policing was taken into account [as we considered promotions]. The ethic of collaboration was built into everything, from academics to officer evaluations.⁸⁰

According to rigorous research done by criminologist Trent Ikerd, this emphasis on measuring what matters in officer evaluation and promotion actually shifted the culture of the department. According to structured surveys issued to the department’s captains, the “vast majority of captains are supportive of [the department’s philosophy.]”⁸¹ The Captains who were most favorable about the department’s unique methodology indicated that

⁷⁴ Darrel Stephens, *Measuring What Matters*, in MEASURING WHAT MATTERS: PROCEEDINGS FROM POLICING RESEARCH INSTITUTE 55 (Nat’l Inst. of Justice ed., 1999).

⁷⁵ See Appendix D, Officer Evaluation Form.

⁷⁶ *Id.*

⁷⁷ Telephone interview with Kerr Putney, Deputy Chief, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Dep’t (Oct. 28, 2011).

⁷⁸ CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG POLICE DEP’T, *supra* note 5, at 29.

⁷⁹ *Id.*

⁸⁰ Telephone Interview with Darrel Stephens, *supra* note **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

⁸¹ Trent E. Ikerd, Examining the Institutionalization of Problem-Oriented Policing: The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department as a Case Study 264 (May 21, 2007) (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Nebraska) (on file with author) (documenting Charlotte’s program and results in over 300 pages) [hereinafter Ikerd, Institutionalization]; see also Trent Eirc Ikerd, *Putting POP to the Pavement: Captains in the*

they had been promoted or rewarded for their collaborative, community-problem-oriented efforts.⁸² Although there is still some resistance by the rank and file, the majority was also supportive of the department's community-problem-solving approach and "evidence [from the CMPD] suggests that the supportive organizational culture of the rank-and-file is related to the policies and practices (i.e., incorporating [the Department's philosophy] into performance evaluations, promotions, trainings... etc.) the CMPD has implemented..."⁸³

By engaging in Stephen's community-problem oriented approach, many captains commented that they came to realize how important collaboration is in preventing and combating crime. One captain noted that "getting the community involved in the... efforts was an important reason for the success of the projects that I have engaged in. Community buy-in helped us to better define and address the [problems] as the citizens play an active role in the project."⁸⁴ It seems that once officers experience a collaborative approach, their perceptions of the usefulness of collaboration become more positive.

Problem-Oriented Policing and SARA

Problem oriented policing is often associated with the SARA method, which Chief Stephens utilized. DOJ describes SARA as:

- Scanning: Identifying and prioritizing problems
- Analysis: Researching what is known about the problem
- Response: Developing solutions to bring about lasting reductions in the number and extent of problems
- Assessment: Evaluating the success of the responses.

*Collaboration and CompStat*⁸⁵

Whereas Chief Stephens used both district-level meetings—where one district-specific, problem-solving project would be discussed—and CompStat meetings to measure progress, Chief Monroe has shifted to a CompStat-, statistics-driven approach. Charlotte's version of CompStat, however, is CompStat with a collaborative twist. Every 28 days, districts report on their progress; two districts report during each meeting. During these morning meetings, the room is full—not only with the captains and lieutenants offering their district reports, but with detectives assigned to that district, with community coordinators, with partners from the vice squad, with guests from other districts hoping to learn best practices, with parole officers, and with other officers who are simply interested.

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department Share Their Experiences, 11 POLICE PRACTICE & RESEARCH 491, 495-96 (2010) [hereinafter Ikerd, POP].

⁸² Ikerd, Institutionalization, *supra* note 81, at 264.

⁸³ *Id.* at 265

⁸⁴ Ikerd, POP, *supra* note 81, at 497.

⁸⁵ The following section is based on observations made by a researcher during the January 19th, 2012 CompStat meeting.

Each meeting is an opportunity to share information across teams. Moreover, while statistics drive the discussion, the community problem-oriented model is still very much in play, and collaboration with the community is a recurring theme.

During each CompStat meeting, both the Captain in charge of the division and the Lieutenants in charge of each of the three response areas within the division report on Part I crime statistics and trends in the area. Then the Deputy Chiefs ask each Lieutenant questions about their division to get to the heart of their analysis and to ensure that the lieutenants are identifying the root cause of any crime trends in the area. As the questioning unfolds, however, Charlotte's CompStat diverges from the typical model, and it becomes evident that both the Deputy Chiefs and the Lieutenants remain committed to the community-problem-oriented model and to the ideals of trust and collaboration that were emphasized under Stephens.

For example, as Lieutenant Jacquelyn Hulsey reviews the burglary statistics for Zone Three—her response area—in the Westover Division, she talks about the disproportionate victimization of Latino businesses and the outreach she is doing to build bonds with the community. Hulsey has just launched a flyer campaign and started serious outreach to the Latino media about the burglaries. Two stories ran in the Latino Weekend this month about the risk of larceny from autos, which she hopes will put business leaders on the alert—but officers have also been running “zone checks,” spending time in local businesses and talking to owners about crime in the area. Moreover, a few of the robberies have taken place in the same area, in a copse of trees that acts as a shortcut between an apartment complex and a shopping center. After scanning the data and gathering more information, Hulsey has analyzed it and determined that the unlit, tree-covered path presents a unique opportunity for crime. In response, she is working with the apartment complex owners, the shopping plaza developers, and other city agencies to get the trees cleared out and the pathway spot-lit. After this, she plans to check back in and re-assess crime rates.

Similarly, after a rash of daytime robberies in Westover's Zone 2, Lieutenant Todd Lontz reached out to the community and to other agencies for collaborative help. In the affected neighborhoods, he is working to revitalize a leadership council that would bring several neighborhood groups together; while the neighborhood block associations are strong, they rarely coordinate, he observes. Since he suspects that the robberies may be a result of some new probationers in the area, he has also organized a series of knock-and-talks in the area that pair police officers with probation officers. The officers ride together and then walk door-to-door, explaining the basics of crime prevention and what to do if residents suspect that someone has committed a crime.

Many of the elements of a community-problem-oriented process, then, are evident even in the traditional CompStat setting. Although Captains are not required to report data on trust and collaboration, Deputy Chiefs are constantly asking what has been done to involve the community when evaluating the Division's response to crime trends. In this way, the Department “measures”—if only informally—the levels of trust and collaboration present in each response area and the impact that collaboration has or has not made on crime.

Measuring the Community's Response: Surveys

Every year, the department partners with MarketWise, a marketing and opinion research firm, to measure community satisfaction and to obtain targeted feedback from Charlotte-Mecklenburg residents. The surveys are, of course, an imperfect tool, but they allow the CMPD to get a rough sense of citizen satisfaction and the level of trust residents have in the police. A copy of the latest survey results is included in the appendix.⁸⁶

The 2011 survey yielded largely positive—and a few particularly interesting—results. Overall, MarketWise was able to report that a “strong majority (80%) of respondents within the CMPD service area indicate their overall impression of the CMPD is positive (rating of 7 to 10). The majority (at least 68%) of respondents give positive ratings, regardless of race/ethnicity or service area.”⁸⁷ In addition, “[s]ince last year, ratings among the total sample of respondents have improved on integrity/honesty and use of force.”⁸⁸ The CMPD does analyze data for trends along racial lines and within neighborhoods, paying special attention to disadvantaged communities. The latest report notes that “African-Americans give lower ratings than Whites and Hispanics on all these measures. However, use of force is the only measure with a substantial percentage of low ratings (i.e., 23% rate 1 to 4 on the 10-point scale).”⁸⁹ This is not entirely surprising, and largely mirrors national trends; nevertheless, the CMPD has been analyzing this data for years and consistently attempts to achieve greater parity.

Recently, the CMPD has begun a campaign to recruit a more diverse workforce from local neighborhoods—for a variety of reasons, but in part to build better bonds with local communities, particularly communities of color. The 2011 survey was used to check-in on community sentiment regarding the diversity of police officers. According to the survey, “[t]he majority of [Charlotte residents] (more than 60%) believe the CMPD should reflect the community in terms of race/ethnicity and gender. About half of the respondents believe the CMPD actually does reflect the community on these demographics.”⁹⁰ In terms of race, “Hispanics and African-Americans are more likely than Whites to believe both gender and race/ethnicity should reflect the community.”⁹¹ For the CMPD, “Hispanics are the least likely to say the CMPD reflects the community on gender or race/ethnicity.”⁹²

Based on this feedback, the CMPD has increased its efforts to recruit minority officers, especially from local neighborhoods. The Department hopes that this will lead to the hiring of officers who are familiar with the Charlotte community and who can earn the trust of residents and neighbors. So far, the Department has made only slight gains in diversity, moving from a department where 80% of officers were white; 18% were black; 1%

⁸⁶ Appendix G.

⁸⁷ *Id.* at 13.

⁸⁸ *Id.*

⁸⁹ *Id.*

⁹⁰ *Id.* at 14.

⁹¹ *Id.*

⁹² *Id.*

were Hispanic; and 1% were Asian⁹³ to a department where 77% of officers are white; 17% are black; 3% are Hispanic; and 2% are Asian.⁹⁴

Still, the survey has proved a valuable tool for the department in terms of measuring satisfaction and levels of collaboration. For example, this year the survey revealed not only that satisfaction was high and that perceptions of integrity had increased, but also that more residents felt safe in their neighborhoods than previous years and thought that the CMPD was actively making Charlotte safer.⁹⁵ On the other hand, the survey also revealed that “[a]ttendance of neighborhood meetings dropped from 2010 to 2011 (25% to 20%),”⁹⁶ which has caused the department to push community leaders to increase attendance at meetings. In terms of awareness, the CMPD learned that “[l]ess than half of the respondents (40%) know where their police division office is located. Relatively few have visited an office in the past year (14%), or know the names of any officers in their division (12%). 22% of respondents are aware that their police division publishes an electronic Response Area Newsletter and 8% of total respondents say they subscribe to the newsletter.”⁹⁷ Accordingly, the department is also pushing its newsletters more—which feature the names of multiple officers and contacts for the department—and lieutenants have increased knock-and-talks and zone checks so that officers have more community contact. Without measuring awareness via the survey, though, the CMPD may never have become aware of the decreased breadth of community contact.

Sweat the Small Stuff

Chief Stephens: Policing, Disorder, Fear, and Trust

Under then-Chief Stephens, the department was focused not only or primarily on Part I crime, the way that many if not most urban departments operate today, but also on lesser disorders. Stephens cared if citizens were upset about their trash not being picked up or about a dilapidated building next door; he saw such disorder as a potential source of crime.⁹⁸ Accordingly, Stephens would instruct his officers to interface with other city departments and to personally ensure that neighborhood disorder was being addressed.⁹⁹ Not only that, but Stephens required his officers to proactively engage with community members to better determine their needs by attending picnics or meetings at churches, as well as by interfacing with them on day-to-day patrols.¹⁰⁰ While some officers seemed irked by the emphasis on community contact, prompting jokes about time spent flipping burgers at neighborhood events,¹⁰¹ this unique focus on community-driven priorities may be what distinguished Stephens’s tenure most.

⁹³ BUREAU OF JUSTICE STATISTICS, U.S. DEPT. OF JUSTICE, LAW ENFORCEMENT MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATIVE STATISTICS, 2000: DATA FOR INDIVIDUAL STATE AND LOCAL AGENCIES WITH 100 OR MORE OFFICERS, available at <http://bjs.ojp.usdoj.gov/content/pub/pdf/lemas00.pdf>.

⁹⁴ E-mail from Paul Paskoff, *supra* note **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

⁹⁵ Appendix G, at 16.

⁹⁶ *Id.* at 18.

⁹⁷ *Id.*

⁹⁸ Interview with Spencer Cochran, Lieutenant, Charlotte Police Dep’t (Jan. 19, 2012) (echoing this view).

⁹⁹ *Id.*

¹⁰⁰ Interview with Todd Lontz, Lieutenant, Charlotte Police Dep’t (Jan. 19, 2012).

¹⁰¹ Interview with Anonymous Police Officer, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Dep’t (Jan. 19, 2012).

While Stephens did introduce CompStat to the CMPD under his tenure, his sense of which crimes were important continued to come, at least in part, from community feedback. His unique reporting system for each division captures the community-centered nature of his philosophy. Every month or two, Stephens would visit each division to hear a report on one problem-oriented program that the division had run.¹⁰² While these programs were expected to link up to the department's overarching goals, they did not necessarily have to be directly related to Part I crime. Instead, the problems could be related to community complaints: moving teenage skateboarders out of an abandoned parking lot, for instance, or addressing the relationship between local pawn shops and stolen goods.¹⁰³ These reports would be presented by the officers themselves—not by captains or lieutenants—to underscore the importance of on-the-ground work.

While some officers still jest about the rush to find a topic and create a new PowerPoint slideshow every month,¹⁰⁴ Stephens's openness to addressing non-Part I issues is worth dwelling on. Small sources of disorder—an overgrown copse of trees, for example, or a cadre of skateboarding youth—can *create* opportunities for crime and undermine feelings of safety.¹⁰⁵ The fact that Stephens was willing to invest resources in small projects like tracking down the neighborhood trash collector may have had an outsized impact on the community's trust of the police. More than one officer commented on residents' gratitude when their local officer personally ensured that a neighborhood nuisance was taken care of.¹⁰⁶ Under Stephens, at least some residents came to know and ask for their local officer by name based on positive experiences.¹⁰⁷ Local officers not only took care of the small stuff, but in many neighborhoods they *started* the homeowners associations and slowly built up community infrastructure.¹⁰⁸

Indeed, for a time the police built trust with communities in part by serving as a connection to other city agencies. According to Lieutenant Spencer Cochran, under Nowicki's regime, the only "community people" in the city "were the police."¹⁰⁹ If poor or minority residents wanted so-called broken windows repaired—whether garbage was sitting out on the corner, or their neighbor's house was becoming a nuisance—residents would often call the police or talk to their neighborhood officer rather than the sanitation department or housing authority. Stephens continued this trend, emphasizing responsiveness to community concerns. "We always had [officers] at neighborhood meetings and festivals," Cochran noted, to listen to the community's concerns and priorities.¹¹⁰ During this time, according to Lieutenant Travis Purdue, the focus was on "loitering and drugs," the kind

¹⁰² *Id.*

¹⁰³ *Id.*

¹⁰⁴ *Id.*

¹⁰⁵ See George L. Kelling & James Q. Wilson, *Broken Windows: The Police and Neighborhood Security*, THE ATLANTIC, March 1982, <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1982/03/broken-windows/4465>.

¹⁰⁶ Interview with Anonymous Police Officer, *supra* note 101; Interview with Spencer Cochran, *supra* note **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

¹⁰⁷ Interview with Anonymous Police Officer, *supra* note 101.

¹⁰⁸ Interview with Spencer Cochran, *supra* note **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

¹⁰⁹ *Id.*

¹¹⁰ *Id.*

of crime that would be most evident to residents looking out their windows.¹¹¹ Lieutenant Todd Lontz observed that, under Stephens, the department's response toward any sort of disorder was "call us—we'll take care of it."¹¹²

While this strategy is by no means specific to low-income or minority communities, it may have been particularly helpful in those neighborhoods. More affluent communities generally are better able to self-police.¹¹³ These neighborhoods have the political capital with which to obtain needed city services, and social networks have been built to foster intra-community collaboration without the police.¹¹⁴ Although the CMPD may not identify disparities in crime as a motivating factor for community policing, at heart the approach is about intervening in low-income areas where social infrastructure has terminally eroded due to poverty, crime, and fear.

Speaking with Stephens, you understand that sweating the small stuff—and by extension a focus on collaboration and trust—are a natural outgrowth of his philosophy of policing:

If you believe in the kind of policing I believe in, you can't do it without meaningful collaboration and partnership. That's built around trust. That comes from actual experience working with each other—not just pronouncements or mission statements. It's what you do on a day-to-day basis. We believed that these problem-solving partnerships had the best chance of making our communities safer on a broad basis. By safety I mean more than just crime rates—I mean a sense that you can walk down the street and not be hassled, feeling comfortable in being on the sidewalk. [I mean] a certain level of civility, a certain level of knowledge in who your neighbors are: that sense of safety.¹¹⁵

Stephens was willing to think of the job of the police in a broad, visionary way. Rather than drawing boundaries around the traditional role of police officers, Stephens challenged his department to think broadly about how they could creatively impact crime, including sweating the small stuff.

It bears mentioning that selling drugs is not a Part I crime, yet open-air drug markets can have a serious impact on a neighborhood's safety and infrastructure. It seems odd to call drug activity "small stuff," but many departments operate under the assumption that Part I crime captures the "big stuff." Drug sales or use may also draw violent crime to a neighborhood—yet there is no reason, for regimes that analyze primarily Part I crimes, for the police to invest large amounts of resources in combating a drug markets or eliminating loitering until drug activity has already drawn violence and property crime to a neighbor-

¹¹¹ Interview with Travis Purdue, Lieutenant, Charlotte Police Dep't (Jan. 19, 2012).

¹¹² Interview with Todd Lontz, *supra* note **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

¹¹³ Tracey L. Meares & Dan M. Kahan, *Law and (Norms of) Order in the Inner City*, 32 LAW & SOC'Y REV. 805, 813-16 (1998) (observing the feedback loop inherent to rising crime rates in minority communities and the status-enhancing nature of certain crimes and arguing that where crime becomes the norm disorder can destroy social organization).

¹¹⁴ See Dan M. Kahan, *Reciprocity, Collective Action, and Community Policing*, 90 CALIF. L. REV. 1513, 1514-15, 1519 (2002).

¹¹⁵ Telephone Interview with Darrel Stephens, *supra* note **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

hood. Addressing these issues proactively may well have stood Stephens in comparatively good stead with low-income or minority communities, where drug crime, unfortunately, tends to concentrate. By sweating the small stuff and by ensuring that his officers did too, Stephens guaranteed that the police department was seen as one of the most reliable and caring departments in the city of Charlotte.

Chief Monroe: Getting the Community to Sweat the Small Stuff

Under Chief Monroe, the meaning of “sweating the small stuff” has changed. Rather than relying on officers to sweat the small stuff, Monroe is attempting to motivate the community to take more responsibility for noticing and addressing small disorders. When asked about the community’s role in the CMPD currently, several staff members commented that Chief Monroe, perhaps more so than any previous chief, “holds the community accountable.”¹¹⁶ As police bandwidth to address the small stuff has decreased, Monroe has continued monitoring and addressing disorder, but has attempted to hold the community increasingly responsible for resolving or reporting small problems.

What “holding the community accountable” means is a bit mysterious—those within the department often had trouble putting their finger on any one action that would exemplify Chief Monroe’s tactics—but after several conversations, some consensus emerged. During a series of initial meetings with the community, when citizens would complain, Monroe would often retort, “Well, what are *you* doing about that problem?”¹¹⁷ He expected that citizen groups themselves would take ownership of certain types of disorder before coming to the police. Moreover, if a citizen talks to their neighborhood officer about an overflowing public trash can, the officer now gives the citizen the number for the city sanitation department rather than tending to the issue himself.¹¹⁸ In addition, department publications emphasize citizens’ obligations to self-police in their neighborhoods.

For example, a recent mailing sent by Response Area 3 of North Division highlights citizen’s obligation to partner with the police to protect their neighbors. The Response Area’s lieutenant writes:

Unfortunately, when we are interviewing neighbors after a crime has been committed, we will hear the neighbor say, “I saw someone walking around the back of the house,” or “I heard the alarm go off.” Our next question is “Did you call the Police?” Every time we ask this question, the answer is “NO!” The officers of the North Division are committed to making this neighborhood safer and crime free.... But we need your help. Call 911 if there is always activity (people coming and going) at your neighbor’s house. Call 911 if you or your neighbor’s dog starts barking for no apparent reason at 1:00 o’clock in the morning. Call 911 if you see someone walking down the street with power tools. **You will remain anonymous.** Our officers have been instructed to **NOT** come to your house if you call

¹¹⁶ Interview with Todd Lontz, *supra* note **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

¹¹⁷ *Id.*

¹¹⁸ Interview with Spencer Cochran, *supra* note **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

911. Our intention is not to cause anyone any undue stress. Instead, we want to partner with the community to stop these crimes.¹¹⁹

Community meetings strike a similar tone. CMPD community coordinators are clearly there at the meetings to help the community; they do want to partner with them to reduce crime. At the same time, officers are there to tell the community members what *they* can do to prevent crime—for example, to be wary of copper pipes in their building, since theft of copper pipes has become common, or to call-in any incident of trespassing in their backyard—not to act as passive recipients of information.¹²⁰ In other words, officers want *citizens* to spend more time sweating the small stuff.

One citizen, reporting favorably on officer's efforts on this front, described the way officers monitored citizens' reaction to crime. "They sent a beat-up van out to an unoccupied house with undercover officers. The officers were acting suspicious, to see if anyone would call 911. *That's* how badly they want us to call 911!"¹²¹ Later, the officers grilled residents regarding why they hadn't called the police.

Another community leader noted, the police "gave us a list of contact numbers so we don't always have to call [them]. The police have better things to do, so I help disseminate that information. . . . Really, the police should be finding robbers, not hauling couches."¹²² When asked about the burden this puts on communities, she noted, "I don't feel that they're putting more back on the neighborhoods. They're just asking the residents to think about it. Now, they have asked us to call in suspicious activity. They are asking us to be more alert."¹²³ To her, the tradeoff was worth it.

Still, Chief Monroe's work in this area has just begun. When asked if the police effectively hold the community accountable in his division, one officer bluntly answered, "No, not yet."¹²⁴

Transparency and Communication Create Trust

Several CMPD employees and at least one academic observed that trust had also been created by the Department's commitment to transparency.¹²⁵ When crises occur, the Department appears to be honest about its mistakes.¹²⁶ The CMPD was one of the first police departments in the country to adopt a community-involved disciplinary process for

¹¹⁹ Direct mailing from Sgt. Norman Garnes, Response Area Commander, North Division: Response Area 3, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Dep't (August 2011) (on file with author).

¹²⁰ Field Observation of Ramblewood Community Meeting (Jan. 19, 2012).

¹²¹ Telephone interview with Marty Doss, President, Madison Park Homeowners Association (Mar. 7, 2012).

¹²² Telephone interview with Jeanne Woolsey, President, Sedgefield Homeowners Association (Mar. 7, 2012).

¹²³ *Id.*

¹²⁴ Interview with Anonymous Police Officer, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Dep't (Jan. 18, 2012).

¹²⁵ Telephone Interview with Kerr Putney, *supra* note 77; Telephone Interview with Joseph Kuhns, Professor, UNC Charlotte (Nov. 16, 2011).

¹²⁶ *Id.*

officers.¹²⁷ It remains conscious of the racial tensions that can result from a largely white police force being present in minority communities, especially where the use of force is involved. Accordingly, Charlotte has assembled a Community Relations Committee that helps citizens file complaints and works to build trust.¹²⁸ Every year, the CMPD issues a public report detailing the number of complaints filed and the circumstances surrounding any deadly use of force. This transparency has helped earn the community's trust. In addition, the CMPD is very proactive about communication with citizens. The Department has designated two officers in each response area as community coordinators, and these officers provide safety reports at every community meeting in their response area.¹²⁹ In addition, the CMPD currently has one liaison specifically assigned to the Latino community.¹³⁰ Each response area also provides citizens with an e-newsletter that provides them with contact information and reviews monthly crime statistics.¹³¹ By keeping in constant communication, citizens report that the police allow them to more effectively collaborate.

Internal Affairs & Discipline

The CMPD has a robust and transparent internal affairs process for investigating both citizen complaints and internal complaints against officers. The Department adopted a disciplinary process that involved community members early, beginning in 1968.¹³² One CMPD publication claims that the “CMPD has set the standard for this citizen-based process.”¹³³ CMPD's Internal Affairs follows a fairly standard procedure, wherein it “investigates matters of significant concern to the community at large,” while other complaints are left to individual patrol divisions.¹³⁴ After the Internal Affairs investigation, an Independent Chain of Command Review Board—which includes a non-CMPD employee from the Community Relations Committee—adjudicates the case and imposes a corrective action.¹³⁵ What is unique about the process is the tradition of community involvement and the level of transparency available.

In terms of community involvement, the CMPD relies on the Community Relations Committee (CRC). The CRC is an independent city department responsible for community outreach, which answers to city government only about administrative matters.¹³⁶ One CMPD report notes that the CRC was created in part because “[s]ome people don't trust the police.”¹³⁷ According to CRC Executive Director Willie Ratchford, “One of the com-

¹²⁷ CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG POLICE DEP'T, 2009 INTERNAL AFFAIRS REPORT 6, available at <http://char-meck.org/city/charlotte/CMPD/organization/PoliceChief/InternalAffairs/Documents/2009IAReport.pdf>.

¹²⁸ *Id.* at 7-8.

¹²⁹ Interview with Anonymous Police Officer, *supra* note 101.

¹³⁰ Interview with Danny Hernandez, *supra* note 73.

¹³¹ See Appendix E, Newsletter for Response Area.

¹³² CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG POLICE DEP'T, *supra* note **Error! Bookmark not defined.**, at 6.

¹³³ *Id.*

¹³⁴ *Id.* at 9.

¹³⁵ *Id.* at 10.

¹³⁶ *Id.* at 5.

¹³⁷ *Id.* at 7.

mittee's goals is to develop trust and communication between Charlotte-Mecklenburg police officers and those who live, work and even visit the Queen City."¹³⁸ Trust and communication, he acknowledges, are particularly important in African-American communities, where the level of trust in the police has traditionally been quite low. In fact, the CRC was created in the 1960s partly to address issues of racism in policing. According to Ratchford, "It's particularly important [to conduct outreach] in the African-American community because there are some young African-American males who believe that even if you witness a crime, you don't talk to the police."¹³⁹ He added, "We want to get them by that. We want them to understand they should be working with the police and not against them."¹⁴⁰

Accordingly, when a citizen wants to make a complaint but does not wish to approach the police, a CRC employee meets with them in person to help with the paperwork. The CRC sees its job, in part, as "educating the community."¹⁴¹ If the complaint goes to the Independent Chain of Command Review Board, a CRC member also sits on the Board.¹⁴² In addition to receiving counseling from CRC, the complainant also receives a letter from Internal Affairs when the case has been concluded to "advise them their case has been thoroughly investigated and resolved."¹⁴³ The whole process generally takes place within 45 days. Officers who wish to appeal their termination or demotion can appeal to the "community-based" Civil Service Board, while complainants who are unsatisfied can appeal to the 11-member Citizen's Review Board.¹⁴⁴

In terms of transparency, not only does Internal Affairs send each complainant a letter detailing the resolution of their claim, but the CMPD also issues a report at the end of each year that outlines the number of complaints made; compiles statistics on how the complaints were resolved; reports statistics on the use of force; and describes the resolution in incidents where deadly force was used. Interestingly, this transparency seems to have led to less misconduct toward citizens and more internal self-policing. As of 2010, the number of reports of misconduct from citizens had either decreased or remained stable for four years straight.¹⁴⁵ The number of internal complaints, however, had risen¹⁴⁶—perhaps indicating a culture where officers and managers are more comfortable honestly reporting misconduct. These statistics reinforce the survey data indicating that more citizens have found the police to have integrity and to use force appropriately in recent years. As Ratchford notes, the transparency of the process is intended to build trust and re-build damaged relationships, primarily in disadvantaged communities.¹⁴⁷

¹³⁸ *Id.*

¹³⁹ *Id.*

¹⁴⁰ *Id.*

¹⁴¹ *Id.*

¹⁴² *Id.* at 8.

¹⁴³ *Id.* at 10.

¹⁴⁴ *Id.*

¹⁴⁵ CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG POLICE DEP'T, *supra* note 4, at 13.

¹⁴⁶ *Id.* at 12.

¹⁴⁷ CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG POLICE DEP'T, *supra* note **Error! Bookmark not defined.**, at 7-8.

Institutionalizing Collaborative and Trust-Building Roles

In order to maintain open communication with all communities, each response area has two community coordinators, officers who have been promoted to a position of greater authority and whose sole purpose is to report and respond to community concerns.¹⁴⁸ In addition, Charlotte has appointed one department-wide liaison for the Hispanic community.¹⁴⁹ By institutionalizing these roles, Charlotte has underscored the importance of routine collaboration and created an opportunity for leaders who wish to collaborate to engage with the CMPD.

Community Coordinators

Community coordinators are integral to the CMPD's trust-building and collaborative work. Between each response area's two community coordinators, at least one officer attends every single neighborhood meeting within every area.¹⁵⁰ Because of the coordinators, every member of the community that attends a neighborhood meeting has the phone number and email address of an officer they can call directly to relay their concerns. The coordinators not only attend meetings, but they play a leadership role in many neighborhood groups. The officers work with community leaders to professionalize and streamline meetings, encourage more community members to attend, and delegate roles to citizens in helping to ensure the safety of their blocks.¹⁵¹ One community leader noted that at these meetings officers "tell us about all the recent crimes by block."¹⁵² The liaisons attend CompStat meetings as well and help the division to problem-solve using any intelligence they have gathered from concerned citizens. They also help to compile a monthly crime bulletin emailed out to each area's community contacts. An example of a bulletin is contained in the appendix.¹⁵³ One leader noted, "Between [the flyers and the meetings], everyone knows what to be on the lookout for. They even tell us what cars to look out for."¹⁵⁴

Regarding the dedication of community officers, the same leader noted that, "Even when the coordinators are on vacation, they email us. One officer was in Europe, and she still kept asking how neighborhood was doing. They really do care."¹⁵⁵

One apartment owner described in detail the gratitude that she felt when the community liaison and lieutenant for her response area helped to turn her apartment complex around. The complex, which was largely occupied by Latinos, had been left in the hands of a management company—but the company failed to alert the owners after several sexual assaults were reported in the complex.¹⁵⁶ When the owner pulled up to her complex and saw police lights flashing, she was horrified. The community coordinator immediately approached to inform her about the assaults and to offer his help. "It was heartbreaking

¹⁴⁸ Interview with Anonymous Police Officer, *supra* note 101.

¹⁴⁹ Interview with Danny Hernandez, *supra* note 73.

¹⁵⁰ Interview with Anonymous Police Officer, *supra* note 101.

¹⁵¹ *Id.*

¹⁵² Telephone interview with Marty Doss, *supra* note 121.

¹⁵³ Appendix E.

¹⁵⁴ Telephone interview with Marty Doss, *supra* note 121.

¹⁵⁵ *Id.*

¹⁵⁶ Telephone interview with Katrina Trotter, Owner, Yorktown Apartments (Mar. 8, 2012).

and shocking to us,” the owner noted.¹⁵⁷ Immediately, she said, “CMPD flooded our apartments. They were always visible. Patrol cars were everywhere.”¹⁵⁸ The increased police presence led to a “shift in the mentality” of residents, she reported. “They got used to seeing the police, and therefore they were able to really form a bond. Officer Morrell spent a lot of time in here. They put so many officers in here. They felt very comfortable telling me what’s going on. It made a huge difference in the crime in the community.”¹⁵⁹ Before long, the rapist was arrested, and the owner began the long, hard work of recuperating her buildings.

Asked about the importance of community coordinators, the owner replied, “It really helps, having that rapport with those officers. It’s not friendship – well, it is friendship, I guess. I can call them about anything at any time.... It takes the stigma out of ‘it’s the whole police force, that big scary thing.’ It makes us feel much better about everything. [Our coordinator is] always here within twenty minutes if I call. That very first day, he was there. That kind of work really does so much.”¹⁶⁰

While one might legitimately worry about the collaborative function becoming siloed within the department, coordinators do have their advantages. They strengthen the community infrastructure—in many cases, neighborhood associations might not continue to exist but for the coordinators—and they provide citizens with a clear and familiar point-person to contact.

Liaison to the Hispanic Community

Given the unique challenges regarding trust, collaboration, and safety faced by the Hispanic community in Charlotte, the department feels that it is important to have a point-person who is similarly a familiar face to the city’s Latino community. In essence, Detective Danny Hernandez is the community coordinator to Charlotte’s entire Latino population.¹⁶¹ It is a job he relishes. Other officers report Hernandez’s ever-growing fame among the city’s Spanish-speaking populace. He has a regular spot on several radio shows, and, according to Hernandez himself, essentially every Spanish speaker in the city knows how to reach him if they need to; his voicemail box is full when he checks it every morning with questions and concerns from local Latinos.¹⁶²

Hernandez is perfect for his job. He is passionate about helping Hispanics in his city, and he is not only a native Spanish speaker but also spent 32 years working in Central and South America with the Army.¹⁶³ Consequently, he is familiar with the many different cultures present in Charlotte’s Latino populace. Hernandez acknowledges that his job is as much about teaching the police about the unique issues facing the Latino community as it is about helping the community to communicate with the police.¹⁶⁴

¹⁵⁷ *Id.*

¹⁵⁸ *Id.*

¹⁵⁹ *Id.*

¹⁶⁰ *Id.*

¹⁶¹ Interview with Danny Hernandez, *supra* note 73.

¹⁶² *Id.*

¹⁶³ *Id.*

¹⁶⁴ *Id.*

Still, there is a serious issue with employing only one person as the liaison for a huge portion of Charlotte's population: eventually, he will retire, and he may be irreplaceable. While Hernandez does direct many calls and inquiries to local districts in an effort to make districts the central clearinghouse for all criminal concerns, and while district employees like Lieutenant Hulsey are increasingly mindful of issues specific to the Latino community, Hernandez is currently the sole face of the police to many Latinos.¹⁶⁵

Leadership Counsels

The CMPD has recently started assembling leadership counsels consisting of leaders from multiple neighborhoods within the same division, in order to improve coordination between neighborhoods. One local leader described her first leadership council meeting, which happened in February of 2012. "The meeting involved six leaders from nearby neighborhoods. We spent time talking about common problems. It's a new idea, an ongoing thing. The police asked us to go back to our neighborhoods, to get a sense of what people are worried about, and then we'll collaborate with the housing authority and other city organizations. Like, there's a property owned by the housing authority at the end of the street, where they're going to do massive renovation. The police are asking them to come so we can talk about how to keep things civil and reduce opportunities for crime."¹⁶⁶ When asked how she thought the meeting went, the leader replied, "After the meeting last night, I'm very impressed that the police are so interested in us. They're doing a really great job. They come to meetings, put together meetings with leaders – doesn't cost anything but time."¹⁶⁷ The CMPD is hoping to expand the work it has done with individual neighborhood groups to connect leaders throughout each response area and address broader crime trends.

Overall, while no mechanism for communication is perfect, the CMPD has made large investments in increasing its transparency and in opening multiple paths of communication with community leaders. These efforts have coincided with decreased citizen complaints, increased perceptions of safety, and an increased perception of officer integrity; perhaps they have even helped to build trust.

An Example of the Three Themes: The Hispanic Robbery Initiative

To make the application of these themes to day-to-day operation concrete, an example may be helpful. Several years ago, the CMPD undertook a problem-solving initiative that came to be known as the Hispanic Robbery Initiative. This initiative focused on the disproportionate victimization of low-income Hispanic residents in certain apartment complexes around Charlotte. In this initiative, the importance of measuring what matters, sweating the small stuff, and maintaining transparency and communication comes to light. The Initiative neatly illustrates how these themes weave together to further trust and collaboration with disadvantaged communities.

The Hispanic Robbery Initiative began when the officers in the Charlie Two District of Charlotte (now the Eastway Division) noticed an increase in the number of crimes where

¹⁶⁵ Cf. Interview with Danny Hernandez, *supra* note 73.

¹⁶⁶ Telephone interview with Jeanne Woolsey, *supra* note 122.

¹⁶⁷ *Id.*

the victim was Hispanic.¹⁶⁸ Upon further investigation, officers found that even more robberies of Hispanics were happening that had gone unreported.¹⁶⁹ Charlotte's International Relations Unit, which was established in light of the upsurge in immigration to Charlotte, joined the District Two team in investigating the problem.¹⁷⁰

The International Relations Unit had already identified several factors that generally cause mistrust between the Hispanic population of Charlotte and the CMPD. Because some Hispanics had emigrated from countries where the police were known for their "brutality and corruption," trust in the police was already very minimal for many residents.¹⁷¹ Other Hispanics who were immigrants linked the police to INS and possible deportation. Cultural differences and language barriers also contributed to a lack of understanding.¹⁷² The Hispanic population, for this reason, tended to be very isolated in Charlotte and concentrated in several apartment complexes. Immigrants also tended to avoid using banks due to institutional mistrust; this fact was well publicized locally and contributed to Hispanic victimization.¹⁷³

The Charlie Two Team identified the Park Apartment area—a 51-building complex with 2,000 residents, 40% of whom were Hispanic—as a robbery hot spot.¹⁷⁴ After examining files for 12 documented robberies in the area, the police learned that most robberies took place at night, near a laundry complex, after a group had been drinking in the parking lot.¹⁷⁵ The police identified several environmental factors that were contributing to the crimes and worked with the apartment's management team to make the area safer. Management banned drinking in the parking lots; improved lighting; shut the laundry area down earlier at night; added key-card access points to most entrances; and began holding monthly community meetings for residents.¹⁷⁶ Meanwhile, the police worked on educating the Park Apartment community on crime prevention in Spanish and distributed translated versions of their crime reduction literature.¹⁷⁷ More officers were sent to patrol the complex on foot and bikes so they could get to know and gain the trust of the residents. The police organized events and athletic leagues for children in the area.¹⁷⁸ They also launched a campaign to increase access to banks and trust in the banking process, which was largely successful.¹⁷⁹

¹⁶⁸ CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG POLICE DEP'T, *supra* note **Error! Bookmark not defined.**, at 2.

¹⁶⁹ *Id.* at 3.

¹⁷⁰ *Id.* at 2.

¹⁷¹ *Id.*

¹⁷² *Id.*

¹⁷³ *Id.*

¹⁷⁴ *Id.* at 2-3.

¹⁷⁵ *Id.* at 3.

¹⁷⁶ *Id.* at 4.

¹⁷⁷ *Id.* at 5.

¹⁷⁸ *Id.*

¹⁷⁹ *Id.*

By the end of the intervention, the Park Apartments were no longer a robbery hot spot. Robberies were reduced by 72.7% in the complex over the course of a year, whereas robberies in the city rose by 13.1% (and rose by 29.7% for Hispanics).¹⁸⁰ Based on the success of the Park Apartment intervention, similar programs were initiated in five other hotspots across the city. After those interventions, the number of residents in the five project areas reporting satisfaction with police service rose from 78% to 82%; the number of residents who claimed they always reported problems to police went from 4% to 14%.¹⁸¹ Tellingly, the number of residents with bank accounts rose from 17% to 35%, which, according to the CMPD, represented “a major step in... robbery prevention efforts.”¹⁸² That said, the project left some room for improvement: while most residents were satisfied with the police, only 14% routinely reported problems to the CMPD.

The Initiative illustrates the potential power of measuring what matters, sweating the small stuff, and maintaining transparency and communication with disadvantaged communities. By measuring CompStat data disaggregated by race, the CMPD noticed a problem. Further, informal “measurement” took place as officers reviewed files, conducted interviews, and found that the problem was even larger than it first appeared. Sweating the small stuff was an integral part of the eventual solution. The CMPD worried over whether Hispanic residents had bank accounts, when the laundry room of an apartment complex closed, and where and when potential victims were drinking. Communication and transparency with both the complex owners and residents was vital. Officers made contact via meetings and zone checks while on foot or bike patrol. Their constant presence helped to build trust and increase collaboration with ownership and residents alike. Projects like the Robbery Initiative showcase the trust building that is possible when Departments combine measurement and meticulousness with transparency and communication.

Evaluation

Impact: Statistics

The impact on crime in Charlotte over the last two decades has been impressive—although the change, for the most part, took the form of a slowly rising wave. Crime declined 37% between 1991 and 2001 during Nowicki’s and Stephen’s early tenure,¹⁸³ more or less on par with the national average.¹⁸⁴ However, as of 2005, Charlotte was still one of America’s ten most dangerous cities to live in.¹⁸⁵ In the last four years, however,

¹⁸⁰ *Id.*

¹⁸¹ *Id.* 6-7.

¹⁸² *Id.* at 7.

¹⁸³ Stephens, *supra* note **Error! Bookmark not defined.**, at 19.

¹⁸⁴ Press Release, University of California - Berkeley, New Research Reveals Historic 1990s US Crime Decline, (Feb. 16, 2007) (noting that crime declined around 40% over the 1990s), available at http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2007-02/uoc--nrr021207.php.

¹⁸⁵ See also Justice Policy Inst., *New Crime Statistics 2* (2005), <http://www.justicepolicy.org/uploads/justicepolicy/>

under Monroe, crime has declined even more dramatically. The crime rate dropped almost 28% between 2008 and 2010 alone.¹⁸⁶ By comparison, nationally the violent crime rate dropped about 10% and property crime dropped about 7%.¹⁸⁷ Charlotte is not only off of the “Top Ten” list of most dangerous cities—it no longer even ranks in the top 100.¹⁸⁸

The impact on officers’ relationship with the community is harder to gauge. Data collected by the Urban Institute in 2003 did seem promising. The Institute surveyed predominantly African-American voting districts via phone interview regarding crime and policing. Almost 300 black residents and over 30 Hispanic residents responded.¹⁸⁹

Most respondents surveyed—70.8%—strongly agreed that the police were doing a good job.¹⁹⁰ Whereas 36% agreed that they feared for their safety in 1996, by 2003 only 25% experienced fear in their neighborhood.¹⁹¹ 41% of Hispanics, however, reported fearing for their safety—a disproportionate number.¹⁹² 68.6% of all those surveyed commented that police visibility was good in their neighborhood, and 77.8% of those who had contact with the police reported that their interactions were generally friendly.¹⁹³

Reported victimization, troublingly, had increased from 1996 to 2003, moving from 7% to 8.8%.¹⁹⁴ While around 8% of blacks reported being victimized, almost 14% of Latinos reported being victims of crime.¹⁹⁵ In addition, as of 2003, most residents surveyed in minority communities *did not* believe that the police had reduced drug sales (only 44.2% thought sales had decreased).¹⁹⁶

As of the CMPD’s 2011 survey, approval ratings were still high in minority communities, but they lagged behind the approval levels offered by whites on almost every survey question.¹⁹⁷ While 80% of all respondents reported positive feelings about the CMPD, only 68% responded positively in the minority community.¹⁹⁸ Ratings regarding police integrity, while not low, also showed disparities, as did approval of police use of force.¹⁹⁹ A very rough comparison places CMPD ahead of national approval rates, both for the

documents/fbi_crime_report.pdf (showing that over two decades after Charlotte first implemented COP, it was still one of America’s most dangerous cities). Note, however, that the FBI strongly discourages ranking cities, as the Policy Institute does here.

¹⁸⁶ CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG POLICE DEP’T, *supra* note 12, at 26-27.

¹⁸⁷ See *Crime in the United States*, Federal Bureau of Investigation, <http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/crime-in-the-u.s/2010/crime-in-the-u.s.-2010/tables/10tbl01.xls> (last visited Apr. 8, 2012).

¹⁸⁸ CQPress, *City Crime Rate Rankings: 2010-11*, at 1 (2010),

http://os.cqpress.com/citycrime/2010/City_crime_rate_2010-2011_hightolow.pdf (showing that Charlotte is now not even in the top one-hundred most dangerous cities).

¹⁸⁹ See UNC CHARLOTTE URBAN INST., *supra* note **Error! Bookmark not defined.**, at 33.

¹⁹⁰ *Id.* at 35.

¹⁹¹ *Id.* at 34.

¹⁹² *Id.*

¹⁹³ *Id.* at 36.

¹⁹⁴ *Id.* at 33.

¹⁹⁵ *Id.* at 34.

¹⁹⁶ *Id.* at 38.

¹⁹⁷ Appendix G, at 15.

¹⁹⁸ *Id.*

¹⁹⁹ *Id.*

population at large and minority communities. While 61% of white Americans report having a great deal or quite a lot of confidence in the police, only 43% of African-Americans report similar levels of trust.²⁰⁰ The numbers for the CMPD are about 20% higher, and the disparity between whites and minorities is 12% rather than 18%.

Impact: Anecdotes

Handling Community Discord: Shootings of African-American Males in 2008

In 2008, in an unfortunate series of events, CMPD officers shot five black men in one year, echoing the tragic events of the 1990s.²⁰¹ This spike in police shootings caused the Charlotte National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) to rally once more against the police. The NAACP called for legislation that would require the State Board to investigate the shootings to ensure that force had been used appropriately and that racism had not played into the incidents.²⁰²

In any other city—or in Charlotte itself a decade earlier—this reaction from the NAACP would have caused a crisis for the police. However, the calm that quickly resumed after the shootings is a testimony to increased levels of trust between the community and its police—and to the power of transparency. In 2008, the police promptly launched an internal investigation into each of the incidents and released the details to the public.²⁰³

Simply sharing information caused the news to slowly dissipate and speculation to ebb. Professor Joseph Kuhns, who has studied the CMPD for years, interpreted the incident as a sign of the CMPD's credibility with the community. Regarding the shootings, he reported

I don't perceive [any fallout from that event]. CMPD has done a number of annual surveys, and the numbers are high. The community is generally supportive. I don't think there are long-term effects from those incidents. Often, the officers have acted appropriately. One of the reasons why CMPD is pretty effective—they communicate info fairly effectively. They have a strong sense of the importance of communication. Transparency. I think the question is—is there a pattern on concern? Here, I don't think so.²⁰⁴

Evidently, the community agrees. A homeowner association president commented, “I don't think the city paid much attention to it. The incidents just went away. Not much was said on the news, and the news really steers people's attention.”²⁰⁵ The NAACP campaign garnered little coverage, and black support for the police did not seem to decline as measured by CMPD satisfaction surveys. That said, surveys are imperfect instruments for gauging the community's reaction, especially where negative reactions to a specific incident may be masked by generic, overall satisfaction data.

²⁰⁰ Bureau of Justice Statistics, *supra* note 1.

²⁰¹ *Stop the Epidemic of Police Shootings of African Americans!*, N.C. NAACP, <http://carolinajustice.typepad.com/ncnaacp/2008/06/stop-the-epidem.html> (last visited Dec. 15, 2011).

²⁰² *Id.*

²⁰³ Telephone Interview with Joseph Kuhns, *supra* note 125.

²⁰⁴ *Id.*

²⁰⁵ Telephone interview with Marty Doss, *supra* note 121.

Interviews and Observations

For her part, community leader Dianne English observed that the relationship between the minority community and the police has changed for the better. She predicted—and the 2008 NAACP incident seems to confirm—that if a series of shootings of black citizens by white officers happened again, the reaction would not be so tumultuous.²⁰⁶ Attorney and community leader Geraldine Sumter confirmed that, while the department is not perfect and there is “still a good bit of distrust,” it has made huge strides in its relationship with the African-American community.²⁰⁷ “People feel much more confident in the last ten years.”²⁰⁸ When a white officer was shot recently, members of the African-American community lined up to pay their respects, and one older man stood up to say, “This is wrong.”²⁰⁹ According to Ms. Sumter, that may not have happened five or ten years ago due to high levels of racial mistrust and enmity.

Driving around in communities like Eastway and Steele Creek and attending community meetings, citizens do generally seem supportive and trusting of the police. Business owners, renters, and community leaders collaborate with the police regularly. Children wave to the police as their cars drive by, even in these low-income, high-crime areas.

Still, the CMPD’s work is not done. In some communities, the attitude toward the police is still openly hostile or negative. In the Metro Division, for example—the highest-crime division in the city—many residents seemed to scrupulously avoid the police. This division covers some of the poorest neighborhoods in the city, and the residents are almost all African-American. The police, by contrast, are nearly all white. Tension is palpable. This is not to say that officers in the area do not value trust and collaboration. Every officer interviewed averred that trust was essential to his or her effectiveness—to obtaining information on crimes and to de-escalating tense situations. However, in a high-crime area where officers are essentially racing from call to call, there is little time for trust building.

Moreover, officers commented that the mistrust in these neighborhoods seemed ancient and intractable. It seemed as if mistrust were built into the community’s culture. Snitches are shunned, and complaints to the police must be made in secret.²¹⁰ To a certain extent, the Benchmark Survey’s words remain true in the poorest, most racially isolated parts of Charlotte: “[S]lavery, sharecroppers, and Jim Crow restrictions... we all know the legacy continues.”²¹¹ Driving around University Park or Biddleville, both of which are in the Metro Division, that past does not feel far away at all. A glance out the patrol-car window is greeted not only by trails of homeless men walking from one shelter to another and by the sight of row after row of abandoned, crumbling, and boarded-up houses, but by a sea of black faces that—understandably—refuse to acknowledge the presence of most police cars. Poverty in the Metro Division is very real, and very racialized.

²⁰⁶ Interview with Dianne English, *supra* note 41.

²⁰⁷ Interview with Geraldine Sumter, Attorney, Ferguson Stein (Jan. 19, 2012).

²⁰⁸ *Id.*

²⁰⁹ *Id.*

²¹⁰ Interview with Anonymous Police Officer, *supra* note 32.

²¹¹ RASH & MCCOY, *supra* note 25, at 26.

In general, both the data and the community's anecdotes in Charlotte are positive, hopeful, and strong. Both the numbers and the public, however, acknowledge that hard work remains to be done.

Summary

For departments seeking a sea change in how they do the business on a day-to-day basis, Charlotte's story provides a complex blueprint for wholesale reform. While Charlotte still has obstacles to face, it has rightly earned a reputation as a national model for collaborative policing techniques and has made serious headway in building trust with disadvantaged communities. Moreover, Charlotte's complicated story shows that trust can be built in stages and can be one building block in the construction of a serious crime reduction strategy.

Principles

- **Measure What Matters**

From the beginning, Charlotte's past three chiefs emphasized a mission statement that centered on the community and incorporated trust and collaboration. Moreover, not only did these leaders message their mission, but they also broke the mission down into yearly goals and benchmarks to maintain focus on key areas impacting crime, perceptions of safety, and the strength and resilience of neighborhoods. Chiefs Nowicki, Stephens, and Monroe also all had ways of measuring community contact and rewarding officers who went out of their way to collaborate with the community and to build trust. Stephens did so by aggressively promoting officers with a community-centered philosophy, which has helped the unique culture of the CMPD to endure. Monroe has done so by maintaining a long list of rewards for officers, like Danny Hernandez, who are loved by the community. The department also obsessively measures Part I crime and disaggregates data by race, which has proven helpful in scenarios like the Hispanic Robbery Initiative. To increase trust and collaboration, however, the department also makes intensive efforts to discern what crime and disorder the community wants to be addressed and how well they are addressing it. From informal check-ins at community meetings to statistically rich surveys, the CMPD attempts to measure community satisfaction and engagement in a variety of ways. Doing so enables them to both detect and reward successful efforts in collaboration and trust building, and to identify and address problems with trust or engagement.

- **Sweat the Small Stuff**

Officers and community members alike reported that "sweating the small stuff" built trust in the police. A policeman's willingness to track down the proper city agency and to take care of local nuisances when citizens asked for help went a long way toward building trust. One community coordinator joked, "After I do something to help one of our residents, it's like I become their own personal police officer. They'll call me directly when they need something, because they trust me."²¹² Monroe has recently attempted to encourage the community to "sweat the small stuff" as well, by testing their willingness to

²¹² Interview with Anonymous Police Officer, *supra* note 101.

call the police when they observe suspicious activity and by encouraging them to report nuisances to the proper agencies. While community members must eventually learn to rely on resources internal to the community for help, sweating the small stuff worked well as a trust-building strategy for the CMPD.

- **Increase Transparency and Communication**

Citizens, scholars, and officers alike agreed that the department's transparency helps to build trust with disadvantaged communities. Both Chief Stephens and Chief Monroe have been dedicated to addressing problems openly and in the media when they occur. No officer is immune from discipline; conversely, when Chief Monroe says use of force was warranted, the public seems to settle down in a way that throws the events of the 1990s into stark relief. Charlotte's Internal Affairs section is incredibly strong and includes trusted community advocates on its team. This has been key to maintaining trust in crisis situations. In addition, regular communication—which often takes place between citizens and community coordinators or via newsletter—seems to aid collaboration as well.

Barriers

- **Community Ownership**

While the police bring community organizations in as partners on discrete projects, most of the CMPD's collaborative work originates from police-level observations and priorities. In all of the projects discussed above, the police were the major change agents; community members merely played a supporting role. It is difficult to find an instance in which the police effectively turned over control of a project to the community wholesale, and there is no clear mechanism by which the community can hold the police accountable. Were the culture of the police department to suddenly change, it is hard to imagine the community being able to turn the tide back toward collaboration. The model involves more police ownership than co-ownership.

- **Not All Crime is Part I Crime**

The CompStat system the department currently uses focuses on Part I crime, since this is the type of crime that the FBI's Uniform Crime Reports catalogue and report to the public on a yearly basis. This general emphasis on Part I crime leaves out several types of crime that may threaten a community's sense of safety—and crimes that tend to be endemic to disadvantaged communities. Drugs crimes and crimes like vagrancy or loitering, for example, are Part II crimes. Under Stephens, disadvantaged communities expressed serious concern over these types of crimes, and the department responded. Now, most of CompStat is spent talking about robberies, which may impact an individual's trust in the police, but may have a smaller impact on overall community trust than, say, an open-air drug market in the neighborhood.

- **Collaboration Doesn't Necessarily Impact Crime**

One of the hard lessons from Charlotte—and from the community policing literature in general—is that building trust and collaboration, in and of itself, may not have an immediate impact on crime rates, especially Part I crime. Reducing fear and disorder sometimes, but not always, has an impact on crime. As of 2005, according to the FBI's measures (which have admittedly been routinely criticized), Charlotte was still a relatively dangerous city. While Charlotte did implement tactics that have been proven to reduce crime elsewhere—for example, problem-oriented policing practices—departments willing to focus on trust and collaboration as well as non-Part I crimes may face criticism from the media, which loves to measure effectiveness using Part I crime rates. Departments need to be prepared to meet this criticism, or they should pair trust-building and collaboration with something more Part I-focused, like CompStat, hot spot policing, or problem-oriented policing.

The Yale Law School Innovations in Policing Clinic is made up of Rebecca Buckwalter-Poza, Kyle Delbyck, Jamil Jivani (lead author for Milwaukee case study), Jeremy Kaplan-Lyman (lead author for Seattle case study), Jessica So, Trevor Stutz (lead author for High Point case study), Carolyn Van Zile (lead author for Charlotte-Mecklenburg case study), and Alyssa Work (lead author for Philadelphia case study).

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The principals on our team include John Crombach, Gail Christopher, Darrel Stephens and James Forman, Jr.

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