



The Columbia Heights Police Department



Summary Data from A Study of Community Oriented Policing Effectiveness

Fall
2014



A Letter from Chief Scott Nadeau

Valuable Community Partners,



In this magazine you will find the results of a comprehensive community survey conducted by the Columbia Heights Police Department (CHPD) in the summer of 2014. The purpose of the survey was to gather citizen feedback and perceptions about Community Oriented Policing (COP) efforts in Columbia Heights, and use this information as one of our performance measures in assessing our agencies effectiveness. The community survey is a part of a larger project that seeks to study the effectiveness of police department programs and community policing efforts. The full results of this study will be released in 2015. It is only through a rigorous and thorough evaluation that we can determine what is working, and how we can better partner with and serve our community. As an agency, we are committed to continuous improvement in this regard.

The COP philosophy, which was adopted by the CHPD in 2008, requires an active partnership with our citizens as well as incorporating their input and feedback in decisions about policing in the community. This survey is just one of many measurements that have been, and will continue to be used by our agency, to ensure that our goals and objectives are in alignment with those of our community and strategic partners.

While we are encouraged by the survey's results, we see that there is even more that we could be doing to ensure that Columbia Heights is an even safer and more connected community. To that end, we will continue to live out our core values of **Committed, Helpful, Professional, and Dedicated** while looking for even better ways to partner for a safer community.

Community Policing Defined

EVERYONE IS TALKING "COP" SO WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

The United States Department of Justice defines Community Policing as, "...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." What this means to the Columbia Heights Police Department is that we want to work closely with the community stakeholders, residents and partners to ensure we are solving the pressing needs of the community. It is not enough for us to randomly seek out crime and disorder and arrest people. Instead, we foster an agency wide approach that encourages us to be active listeners and problem solvers.

In Columbia Heights, we invest in regular programs that put us in touch with the community. These programs include Neighborhood Watch, Business Watch, Youth Open Gym, D.A.R.E., Senior Citizen Academy, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Anti-Bullying Reading Program, National Night Out, Community Picnics, and *Coffee with a Cop*. These activities are part of our ongoing Strategic Plan that seeks to prevent crime and disorder before it occurs. At the same time, we realize that proactive police work can be the right answer to a particular problem. In these situations, we employ intelligence led policing efforts and utilize tools like our Street Crimes Unit, the Anoka Hennepin Drug and Violent Crime Task Force membership, and directed patrol strategies.

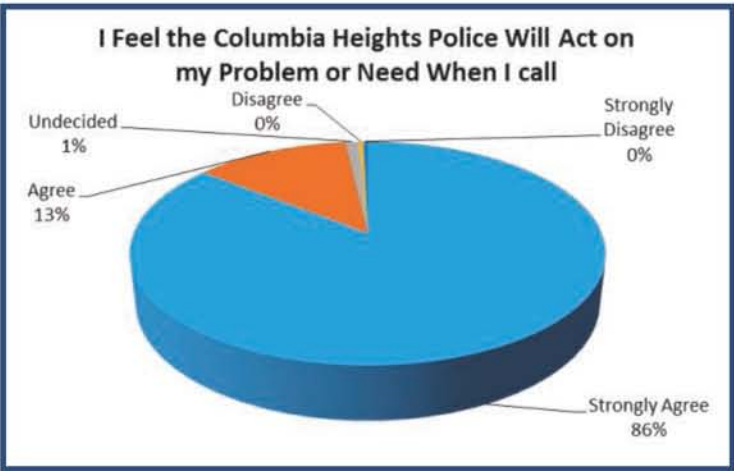
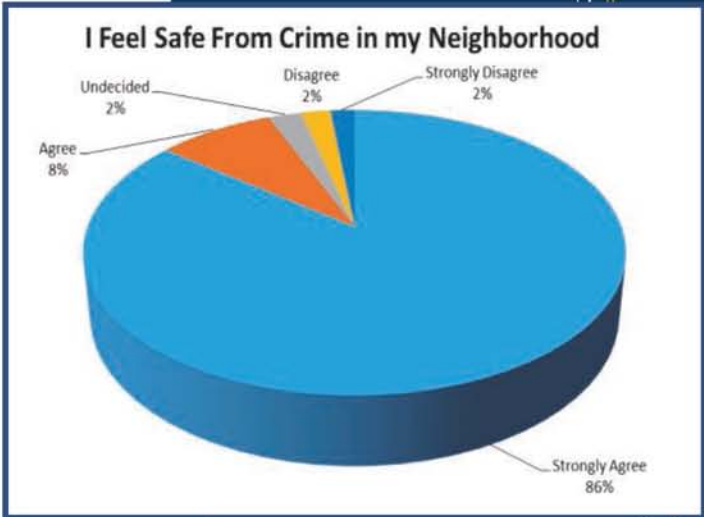


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Community Safety

RESIDENTS FEEL SAFE IN THEIR HOMES

Your home is your castle and as such, it is important that you feel safe and secure in your both your residence and community. An astounding 94% of the respondents from our survey reported they feel safe from crime in their neighborhood. This is a great accomplishment brought on by the collaboration between the police and the community. This is evidence of the close eye the residents are keeping on their neighborhood and calling when needed. Once that problem is identified, we will take responsibility to act on it appropriately.

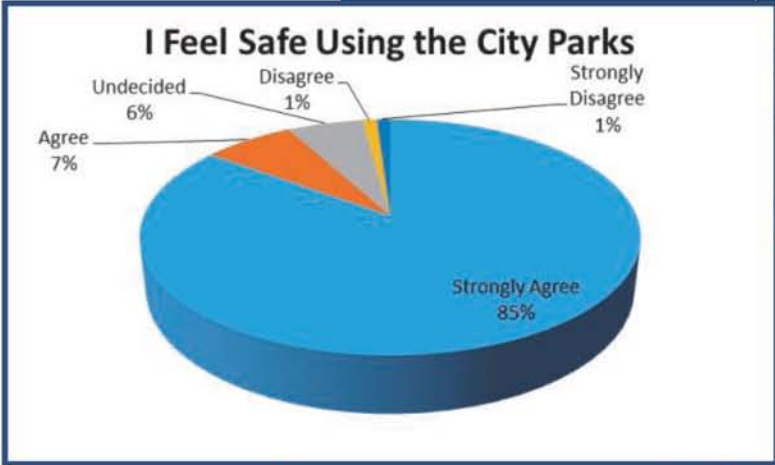


RESPONSIVENESS

Have a concern or a problem?
We want you to call us, after all, no one knows your neighborhood better than you.
We were pleased to hear that 99 % of residents felt we would act on their problem when called.
Keep those calls coming in as we continue our partnership for a safer community.

WORK, LIVE, PLAY

Columbia Heights has some great parks, as well as places to shop, relax and enjoy the outdoors throughout the city. We were pleased to hear that 92% of the respondents felt safe using the city parks.

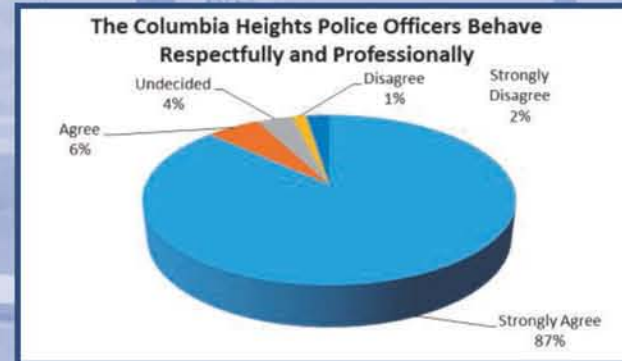


Crime, Perception and the Police



PROFESSIONALISM

We have identified being professional as one of our core department values. What this means to us is that we hold ourselves to the highest professional standards. We keep apprised of changes in the law and utilize industry best practices. We value higher education and employ officers that have advanced degrees. We value the critical thinking and problem solving skills that are emphasized in a college degree program. It also means we serve with compassion and decency, as we work with the community to understand their issues and situation. Recent efforts have included collaborations that better able us to respond to both residents and veterans in a mental health crisis, and efforts to improve customer service skills.

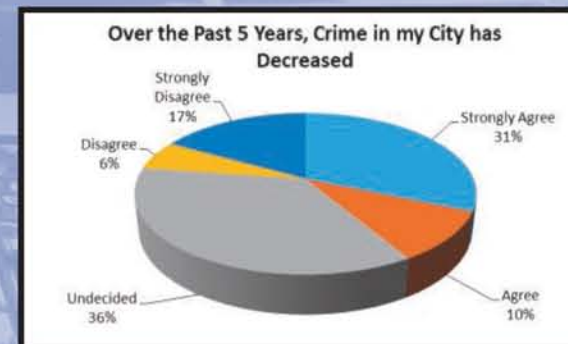


CRIME IS DOWN

The crime rate has been dropping consistently in Columbia Heights over the past several years. Five years ago, in 2009, the Columbia Heights Police Department received reports of 2,341 crimes. In 2013, that number was down to 1,502 and it continues to drop in 2014. That is a drop of 35% in reported crime over five years. These numbers continue to outpace both the national as well as the local averages. Surprisingly, only 41 % of our respondents felt that crime in the city has decreased. This is telling us there is more opportunity to work on communicating these drops, as well as identifying the issues that residents are perceiving.

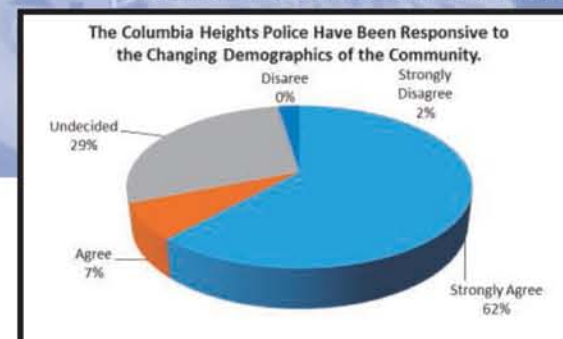
“The Columbia Heights Police Department has worked hard to identify and respond to the community needs”

-Mayor Gary Peterson



THE CHANGING NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY

Recent news headlines have highlighted the challenges that police face when dealing with a changing community. We are committed to treating all people we come in contact with in a professional and respectful manner. We seek to form relationships through activities like community picnics, education and question and answer sessions with members of different ethnic groups. 69% of respondents reported that we have been responsive to the changing demographics in the community.



“Patrols have reduced crime and reduced groups of people, preventing them from hanging around.”

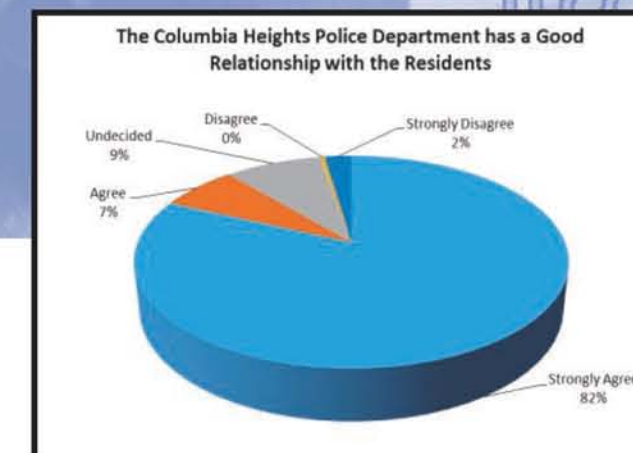
-A Sheffield Neighborhood Resident

“The police are interacting well with kids at the school and Columbia Academy”

-Homeowner on the east side of Columbia Heights

FORMING RELATIONSHIPS

We don't want to meet you for the first time when you call as the victim of a crime, or you are involved in an accident. We also want to meet you on good days and hear how well things are going and we want your feedback on where we can help and what we should be watching for in our community. 89% of respondents reported that the Columbia Heights Police have a good relationship with the residents, and this is encouraging. We are working to get out there on foot patrol, while riding bikes and by rolling down those windows in our squad cars. It is these relationships that allow us to better serve the needs of the community.



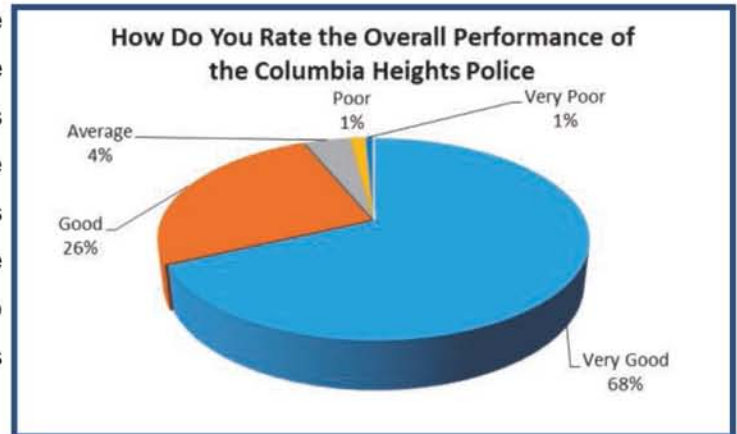
“I think community policing approach is great with the PD - especially with Coffee with the Cops, National Night Out, Community Picnics, programs in the schools, playing basketball at the Hyland center, etc.”

-City Partner



Overall Performance of the Police Department

Ensuring that we are performing well is important to the Columbia Heights Police Department. We have been measuring performance internally for several years now. We cast a critical eye on ourselves as we compare our efforts to our goals listed in our annual strategic plan. There have been successes, as well as misses and needs for readjustment. At the same time, we have realized the need to have our performance measured by those outside the agency. In 2012, we received the International Association of the Chiefs of Police Community Policing Award for our efforts in connecting with the community. This was a great affirmation, by a group of well qualified peers, that we were on the right track. But even more important to us is the feedback from the residents and partners that work with us on a daily basis. We feel very appreciative that 94% of the respondents rated us as good, or very good. This tells us we are on the right track, but we are not ready to bank on this yet. We feel there is always more you can do to improve.



Our Commitment to the Community

Our commitment to the community is that we will continue to improve as we seek ways to collaboratively solve problems and increase the safety for the residents of Columbia Heights. We will be good stewards of community resources as we continue to invest in preventing crime from occurring. We have examined both the rate of crime occurring in the city, as well as the feedback provided by residents, partners and community stakeholders. The results are positive and indicate the plan we have in place is working. We are not going to become complacent however, we are going to continue to invest in youth outreach through reading programs, mentorship, and education. We will continue to invest in relationships with all community members, and employ a police force that is representative of the community we serve. We know there are still great ideas out there and

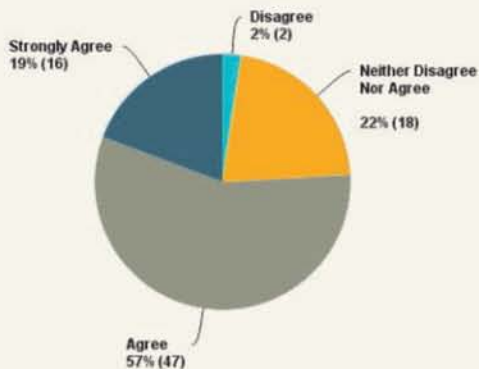


innovative ways to make this community a safer and more enjoyable place to live and work. As we shift our focus into prevention and community building, we continue to encourage officers and residents to help drive the direction of our policing efforts. It is our honor to continue to serve the Columbia Heights community through this effective collaboration.

Our Strategic Partners and Stakeholders

Partnerships are one of the hallmarks of our community oriented approach. We could go on for pages about the benefits of our numerous partnerships, but for the sake of brevity, we will simply say the ongoing collaboration has been valuable. Working as a team can bring with it a certain set of challenges, but when everyone is working in the same direction some amazing things can happen. 72% of our partners that responded felt the collaborative relationship was working to solve their problems. 61% of the respondents felt they had an affect on the crime reduction in Columbia Heights.

Do you think the strategic partnership between the Columbia Heights Police Department and you, or your organization, has created a reduction in crime?



WHAT OUR PARTNERS ARE SAYING

The word from our partners is they value the collaboration as much as we do. Area landlords, business leaders, school

officials and members of other government units all point to communication and collaboration as key to getting the job done. They note the improvements that have been made in this area and how they have helped to increase the effectiveness in addressing community needs. This has not been an, "us versus them" approach, but rather, a way of looking at any situation and evaluating what we can both bring to the table. This active listening and problem-solving strategy has led to some great success in mitigating ongoing community issues.



"I think the CHPD is more professional in its dealings with County Government --where I work. The CHPD has implemented higher standards, and seems to be earning more respect."

-Community Stakeholder respondent



"I appreciate the approachability of the department and the communication is excellent"

-Community Stakeholder respondent

Mission Statement

The Columbia Heights Police Department is committed to active partnerships with the community in order to protect life and property, innovatively solve problems, and enhance the safety and quality of life in the communities we serve

About the Survey

The information contained in this brochure was obtained through a series of scientifically designed surveys, conducted in collaboration with an academic research professional, in the City of Columbia Heights, and with our community partners. Over 400 unique responses were obtained, with a margin of error of approximately $\pm 5\%$. A full analysis of the comprehensive study will be available in 2015.

The Columbia Heights Police Department

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