

# BELLAIRE POLICE DEPARTMENT

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CITY OF BELLAIRE  
NORMAN - ZARATE  
POLICE & MUNICIPAL COURT

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## SERVICE PLAN

**2022-2024**

Last Updated 05/10/2022

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# WHAT IS A DEPARTMENT SERVICE PLAN?

## Part of the Planning Process

Strategic planning for departments is a continuous process. Working with City Management and other areas as needed, departments develop a service plan document that is designed to cover a three-year planning period. Periodic updates are made on an as-needed basis in order to respond to feedback from the public, City Council, City Management, and other influences.

The Department Service Plan is intended to provide for all of the following functions:

### SERVICE CONTRACT

*The Department Service Plan establishes services provided and at what levels to:*

- Illustrate in detail what services the City provides
- Explain how the City provides those services
- Provide a means for the City to hold itself accountable for maintaining high levels of service throughout the City

### PLANNING DOCUMENT

*The Department Service Plan is a comprehensive planning document that*

*:*

- Illustrates the connection between operational services and activities, and long-term goals and objectives
- Enables each Department to define their role and responsibilities within the City to ensure a consistent vision and message across all departments
- Analyzes and reviews the department to recognize the strengths, opportunities, and other operational realities necessary when planning for the future

### COMMUNICATION DOCUMENT

*The Department Service Plan is a vehicle to communicate with the public by:*

- Affording the City the opportunity to be open and transparent
- Informing residents and the public on how the City provides day-to-day services

### WORK PLAN

*The Department Service Plan is an operational document to set expectations and look for internal process improvements.*

- Creates a road map for how service goals are met
- Makes the connection between front line objective and organizational objectives

### BUDGETING TOOL

*The Department Service Plan is a tool to be used in the budgeting process that can:*

- Facilitate current and future fiscal concerns
- Allow departments to show cost estimates ahead of the budget cycle
- Provide an opportunity for strategic thinking necessary in the budget process

## CITY STRATEGIC PLANNING MODEL

### The City's Strategic Planning Model

In an effort to define and visualize linkages from various planning efforts and policy direction, the City has utilized a strategic planning model to identify various planning factors that influence and guide City operations. A key component in this model is the Department Service Plans, which are designed to have a three-year planning term.



## CITY COUNCIL STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS

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*As of April 2022*

Compatible with Core Values focused on...

### Community

- Building a sense of community, unity, and togetherness
- Celebrate, respect, and encourage diversity.

### Governance

- Efficient, Effective and Transparent Government and Governance
- Clear, transparent communication.
- Commitment to timely customer service.
- Environmental consciousness and responsibility.
- Building partnerships and being supportive of institutions and commercial areas.
- Being a great place to work.

### Infrastructure

- Flood Mitigation and Drainage.
- Asset Management - Planned, reliable, and well-maintained infrastructure and facilities.

### Public Safety

- A safe community.

### Quality of Life

- Parks, recreations, library, and other amenities that enhance quality of life.
- Land Use and Zoning
- Clear, predictable, and enforced land use, zoning, and code controls.
- “Improving the Quality of Life”

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF



*Onesimo Lopez*  
Chief of Police

I am proud to present the Bellaire Police Department's service plan for Fiscal Years 2022 through 2024. This plan outlines the vision for the future of the department and was crafted with input from all department employees. The plan will serve as a single guiding document that identifies the department's priorities and where I see the department headed in the future. It is important to note that this is a living document subject to change as objectives are met or conditions within the department, city, or law enforcement change.

The format of the document is fairly straightforward. It starts with a description of the service plan process and City Council Strategic Focus Areas. What follows is a description of the organizational structure and departments assets. Next is an overview of the divisions within the department as they were staffed through April 2022.

The document then proceeds to an overview of action items from the 2018 Service Plan which covered Fiscal Years 2019 through 2021. This overview describes the action item as envisioned in 2018 and the status of the objective as of 2021. Finally, there is a brief explanation of the strategic planning philosophy used in drafting goals and objectives for the department.

What follows next are the department's goals and objectives separated into three different categories. First will be Short-Term Objectives. These are goals or initiatives the department will seek to undertake immediately and through the first fiscal year (2022). Next will be Mid-Term Objectives. These are initiatives the department envisions carrying out between fiscal years two and three (2023-2024). Finally there are Long-Term Objectives. These will be initiatives the department will undertake in the future beyond Fiscal Year 2024.

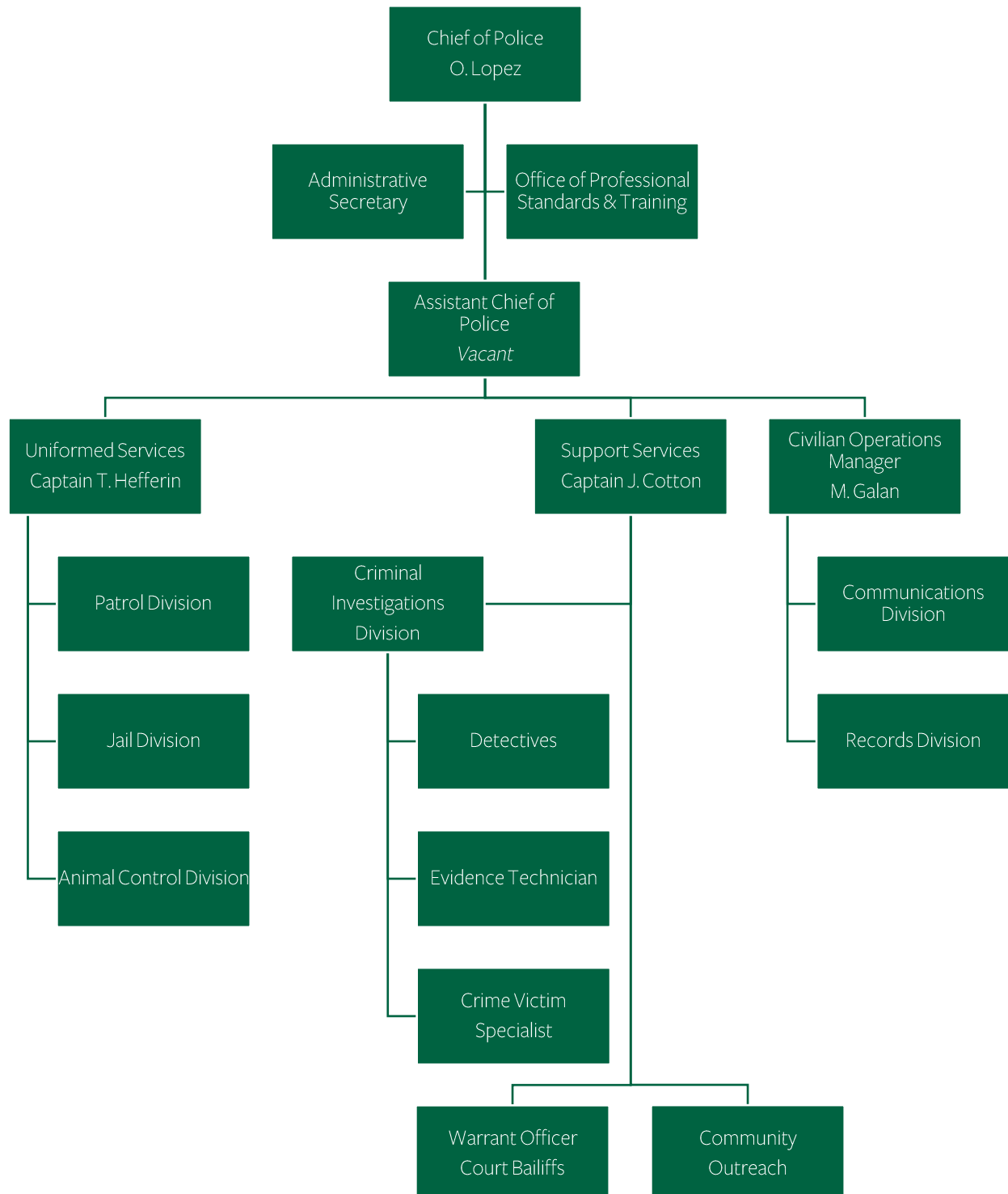
This plan is meant to be a reference for members of our community, city leadership, and police department staff members. I pray that this service plan will help focus department efforts on keeping the City of Bellaire a great place to live, work, and visit.



Onesimo Lopez  
Chief of Police

## ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

*The Bellaire Police Department has 57 FTE's across 3 divisions.*



## DEPARTMENTAL FUNCTIONS

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## DEPARTMENT ASSETS

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### Vehicles

- Nine Ford Police Interceptor SUVs (marked)
- One Ford Police Interceptor Sedan (marked)
- One Training Ford Police Interceptor SUV (marked)
- Eight Chevrolet Tahoe Unmarked (CID/Senior Staff)
- One Ford Explorer Unmarked (Staff)
- One Ford F-150 Truck Unmarked (Station)
- One Ford F-250 Super Duty Animal Control Truck
- Two Specialty High-Water Rescue Trucks
- One Harley Davidson Police Motorcycle
- One 1955 Classic Police Car

### Facilities

- One Public Safety Building with Jail Facility
- One Animal Pound
- One Impound/Evidence Storage Facility
- One Firearms Range

### Strategic Partners

- City Departments
  - Public Works
    - Assist with special event support and traffic studies
  - Development Services
    - Assist with municipal code enforcement
  - Parks, Recreation, and Facilities
    - Facilities maintenance and special event support
  - Fire
    - Critical incident support, special event support, and training
  - Library
    - Programming collaboration and special event support
  - CMO
    - Planning and project support
  - Finance
    - Procurement support
  - IT
    - Computer and software support

### Community Partners

- **Friends of the Bellaire Pound**

### Boards and Commissions

- Community Police Training Advisory Committee

## OPERATIONAL AREAS OF FOCUS

Service Category	Service Function	Service Delivery Description	List of Associated Activities/Tasks
Law Enforcement	Preventative Patrol	High visibility patrol of neighborhoods and business to deter incidents of crime	Random Patrols Directed Patrols Business Checks
	Field-Based Investigations	Call for service response	Report-taking Field Investigations Evidence Collection
	Arrest of Offenders	Arrest of criminal offenders	Arrest Transport Processing
Traffic	Crash Investigation	Respond to and investigate traffic crashes	Investigation Report-taking Citation Issuance
	Traffic Calming	Enforcement of Traffic Laws	Violator Stops Issuance of Warnings Citation Issuance
Community Outreach	Community Engagement	Individual and group contacts to build relationships and familiarity	Outreach Programs Education Sponsored Events

## UNIFORMED SERVICES DIVISION

The Uniform Services Division is the largest and most visible division in the department. As indicated by the title, this division is composed of the majority of sworn police officers that perform their duties in uniform. The Uniformed Services Division operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Officers drive highly-visible patrol cars equipped with audio/video recording systems, speed detection equipment, and communications/data technology that transform the patrol vehicle from a basic vehicle to a mobile office.

The Uniformed Services Division are the department's first responders that provide proactive police patrols, enforce local, state, and federal laws, and provide assistance to citizens in need. The Division performs initial investigations into criminal offenses and crashes and works to prevent crime and disorder throughout the City of Bellaire.

Within the Uniformed Services Division is Patrol, the Traffic Unit, Animal Control Officer, and Jail Operations.

### Patrol

The Patrol Division is composed of four Squads, A–D, that work in 12-hour shifts providing 24-hour patrol coverage for the city. The Patrol Division has an authorized strength of twenty-one (21) officers and eight (8) supervisors spread across the four squads. Each squad is led by one Lieutenant and one Sergeant.

Patrol staffing is periodically augmented by one part-time officer. The part-time officer supplements Patrol staffing by filling vacancies created by illness, vacation, or other time off as he is able.

### Traffic Unit

The Traffic Unit is a specialized assignment within the Uniformed Services Division. The duties of the Traffic Unit are to conduct specific traffic enforcement activities designed to target problem locations or to address specific traffic complaints originating from citizen reports. The Traffic Unit has one motorcycle officer assigned to full-time traffic enforcement duties. As staffing has allowed, one additional officer has been assigned to the Traffic Unit to expand the reach of traffic enforcement activities.

As of March 2022 the only member of the Traffic Unit is the department's sole motorcycle officer. In recent years due to staffing shortages this motorcycle officer has been assigned to perform Patrol functions leaving the Traffic Unit unstaffed. The future staffing of the Traffic Unit is a management improvement project that will be discussed later in this document.

### Animal Control Officer

The Animal Control Officer is one of two uniformed civilian members of the Uniformed Services Division. The Animal Control Officer does not carry a police officer commission. The duties of the Animal Control Officer include providing routine patrol of the City of Bellaire for animals at large and conducting enforcement activities related to the City of Bellaire Animals and Fowls ordinances. The Animal Control Officer has authority to issue citations for state health and safety code and city violations as appropriate.

The Animal Control Officer is responsible for managing operations of the Bellaire Pound, a stand-alone facility intended for the short-term housing of lost or stray animals found within the city. The Animal Control Officer also transports unclaimed animals to local rescue or rehoming groups for adoption.

The Animal Control function and Bellaire Pound are both management improvement projects that will be discussed later in this document.

## Jail Operations

Jail Operations are managed by a civilian Jail Attendant assigned to perform his duties during regular business hours Monday through Friday. The Jail Attendant is responsible for managing the department's six designated male jail cells, three designated female jail cells, as well as overseeing the Juvenile Holding Facility, AFIS machine, and Intoxilyzer security.

The Bellaire Municipal Jail is used for the short-term housing of individuals arrested by the Bellaire Police Department and held until arraigned by a Judge for Class C offenses. Individuals arrested for Class B or above offenses are held until intake processing procedures are completed and the individual may be transferred to the Harris County Jail Facility.

## SUPPORT SERVICES DIVISION

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The Support Services Division provides specialized functions necessary for the department to accomplish its mission of service to the community. The service areas of the Division vary but all provide direct support to the Uniformed Services Division.

The Support Services Division is composed of the Criminal Investigations Division, an Evidence Technician, a Crime Victim Specialist, the Warrant Officer, and part-time Bailiffs.

### Criminal Investigations Division

The Criminal Investigations Division (CID) conducts follow-up investigations into crimes against people and property. Sworn officers assigned as Detectives work closely with the Patrol Division, Bellaire Municipal Court, the Harris County District Attorney's Office, and other law enforcement partners to prepare cases and evidence for the prosecution of crime. As crime has no boundaries, CID works closely with other law enforcement agencies to develop criminal intelligence and investigate regional and local cases. CID is also responsible for registering sex offenders and ensuring offenders remain compliant with all restrictions.

The Criminal Investigations Division is composed of three full-time and one rotating detective. The rotating detective is a patrol officer selected through a competitive application process to fill a two-year rotation or assignment within CID. The intent of the rotating detective is to develop investigative skills for patrol officers and provide a pipeline for new detectives when openings in the division occur.

The rotating detective is subject to recall to the Patrol Division to fill vacancies created by injuries or extended leave due to military deployments, on-the-job injuries, or retirements/resignations.

Supervision of CID is provided by a Detective Lieutenant who is also responsible for supervision of the Detectives, Evidence Technician, and Crime Victim Specialist.

### Evidence Technician

The Evidence Technician is responsible for the care, custody, and disposition of all items of evidence collected by patrol officers and detectives. The Evidence Technician manages the restricted-access Property Room inside of which most items of evidence are catalogued and stored. The Evidence Technician is also responsible for evidence stored at the department's controlled-access impound yard located off-site at the City of Bellaire Public Works Facility. This impound yard is where large items of evidence and vehicles are stored. The Evidence Technician is supervised by the Detective Sergeant.

The status of Evidence Technician and future training initiatives for the position is a management project that will be discussed later in this document.

### Crime Victim Specialist

The Crime Victim Specialist Program within the department is funded through a grant from the Department of Justice Victims of Crime Act (VOCA). The goal of the Crime Victim Specialist program is to provide services,

protect, and advocate for victims of crime, family members of victims to assist in preventing further victimization and secondary trauma. Additionally, this specialist serves as a conduit between crime victims, the police department, detectives, and other entities in the criminal justice system to provide information on case status, available restoration resources, and provide additional support to the victims as needed. The Crime Victim Specialist is supervised by the Detective Lieutenant.

The Crime Victim Specialist position was created in April 2020 and is funded through September 2022. The future funding of the Crime Victim Specialist program is a management project that will be discussed later in this document.

## Warrant Officer

The Warrant Officer works closely with Bellaire Municipal Court to input, manage, validate, and clear Class C municipal warrants issued by the court. The Warrant Officer also serves misdemeanor arrest warrants through direct execution of warrants or conducting transports of subjects with outstanding Bellaire PD warrants arrested by area law enforcement agencies.

The Warrant Officer is assigned to an Administrative Monday through Friday, business hours schedule and is supervised by the Support Services Captain.

## Part-Time Bailiffs

The department maintains part-time sworn Bailiffs whose main role is to maintain order during courtroom proceedings. Bailiffs are responsible for ensuring that the public, jury, attorneys, witnesses, defendants, and complainants proceed through trials and other court proceedings with the required decorum. Bailiffs are required to search all court visitors and maintain security of the court will in session.

The department has two (2) part-time bailiffs. These bailiffs are assigned to work when in-person court is in session and also work as visible security during regular City Council meetings. The bailiffs are prohibited from working more than 30 hours a week and more than 1,000 hours per calendar year. Bailiffs are supervised by the Support Services Captain.

## Community Outreach Officer

The Community Outreach Officer provides public education and administers programs that build relationships with the community and provide services that strengthens neighborhoods and empowers citizens to keep their homes and community safe. The goal of the Community Resource Officer is to reduce crime and enhance the quality of life in Bellaire.

## CIVILIAN OPERATIONS DIVISION

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The Civilian Operations Division provides direct support to Uniformed and Support Services. This support is provided by the Communications Division and Records Division.

### Communications Division

The Communications Division is the primary answering point for all non-emergency calls and emergency 9-1-1 calls for police, fire, or emergency medical services (EMS) for the City of Bellaire. As with Patrol, the Communications Division is staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and is responsible for providing emergency communications for police, fire and EMS, Animal Control, and after-hours requests for city services.

The Communications Division authorized staffing includes nine (9) full-time and three (3) part-time telecommunicators that work overlapping schedules of different lengths and days. Telecommunicators work either 12- or 8-hour shifts as shift coverage needs frequently change. The Communications Division is supervised by the Civilian Operations Manager who is responsible for all 12 employees.

Supervision of twelve employees working day and night shifts by a single supervisor exceeds the department goal for span of control for a supervisor. The supervision of the Communications Division as well as the scheduling of telecommunicators is a management project that will be discussed later in this document.

### Records Unit

The Records Unit is responsible for maintaining police records, providing service to the community through the main lobby point of contact, assisting with Texas Public Information Act Requests, and working with other law enforcement partners to provide necessary record transfers to support the law enforcement function. The Records Unit is staffed by two civilian employees: an Information Coordinator and a Records Technician.

The Information Coordinator is the department's Custodian of Records and is responsible for answering Public Information Act Requests and responding to court orders for department records. The Information Coordinator is responsible for maintaining the Police records system, managing and coding criminal information, preparing reports, and researching, retrieving, updating, and purging data. This position will also answer incoming non-emergency calls, maintain accurate accounts of all reports, and prepare packets for prosecution as appropriate.

The Records Technician is also responsible for managing and coding criminal information, preparing reports, and researching, retrieving, updating, and purging data. This position will also answer incoming non-emergency calls, maintain accurate accounts of all reports, and prepare packets for prosecution as appropriate. This position also assists with the processing of open records requests per the Texas Public Information Act.

## SPECIALIZED POSITIONS

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### Office of Professional Standards & Training

The Office of Professional Standards is a department supervisor responsible for a variety of functions within the department. These duties include developing and maintaining the department's General Orders, maintaining the training schedule, managing department training records, and assisting with quality control of officer/citizen interactions and written documentation. The office also is responsible for managing the hiring process to include conducting background investigations and ensuring compliance with reporting and documentation requirements for sworn and civilian employees.

One of the most important duties of the Office of Professional Standards is its oversight and accountability function. The Bellaire Police Department is committed to providing professional, high-quality services to all persons and does not tolerate misconduct or wrongdoing on the part of its members. The Office of Professional Standards investigates incidents of alleged misconduct or violations of the department's policies or procedures.

As of April 2022 the position of Professional Standards & Training is held by a department Lieutenant.

## STRATEGIC PLANNING PHILOSOPHY

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The first step in the strategic planning process was to undertake a study of the department. While current staff was capable of conducting such a study, it was preferred that an outside contractor be brought in to ensure objectivity and avoid any potential bias. In August 2020 the department contracted with an outside service provider, Emergency Services Consulting International (ESCI), to conduct this study. This study was intended to be a comprehensive review of the agency's operations and management that compared the Bellaire Police Department to national 'best practices' recommendations. Areas of focus for the study was to assess accountability, staffing, policies, crime control, citizen engagement, and resource management. It was intended that this study would prepare the department for emerging conditions and trends, identify existing needs in terms of staffing and resources, review accountability to community and elected officials, and to review organizational effectiveness.

The driving force behind conducting this study was the impending leadership transition that will occur with the retirement of current Chief of Police Byron Holloway as well as the current national discussion on police reform. The department sought to identify potential improvements in efficiencies and delivery of service to ensure that the department is meeting and where possible exceeding community expectations for standards of service

This resulting study serves as the foundation for the short-, mid-, and long-term planning of the department. Short-Term objectives are those that may be accomplished in a time frame between immediately and through year one. Mid-Term objectives are those intended to be accomplished between year one and through year three. Long-Term objectives are those that may be accomplished between year three and beyond.

The study recommendations are incorporated into this service plan along with department-initiated goals. The goals and recommendations all seek to improve the structure of the department, improve the level of service provided to the community, and improve department operations. The resulting service plan is intended to serve as a "road map" for the future. This plan will be referenced in each of the subsequent Fiscal Years to inform the budgeting process.

The incoming Chief of Police, Onesimo Lopez, conducted Leadership and Planning meetings with the entire department between February and May, 2021. These meetings were meant to inform the planning process while at the same time providing an opportunity for all staff members to connect with the new administrator. During those meetings it was learned that historically the department "made do" with policies, procedures, equipment, and facilities. As a result, there were few capital improvement projects carried out within the department. Only when an asset is at the end of its service life and could not be repaired or upgraded any longer would the asset be repaired. An example of this is the CAD/RMS software that had been installed in 1999 and was still in place in 2021 though it no longer could meet state and federal reporting requirements and failed to keep pace with technology.

This "make do" philosophy was reflected in the short list of action items contained in the FY2019-FY2021 service plan. This can no longer be the acceptable philosophy for a 21st century police department. The incoming Chief of Police relied on past experience and emerging law enforcement research and training to identify realistic goals and objectives suitable for an agency the size of the Bellaire Police Department and suitable for the City of Bellaire.

To create future goals and objectives, the department considered questions related to police service delivery in Bellaire. These questions included:

- How do we maintain a safe and secure community?
- How do we enhance our services and interaction with the community we serve?
- How do we utilize technology and equipment to maximize efficiency?
- How do we prepare for future growth?
- How do we plan the organizational structure of the department and deploy personnel effectively?
- How do we develop employee skills and leadership?

These questions were applied not only to where the department is in 2021 but also considered where the department wants to be in 2022 and beyond. While there is no way to accurately anticipate every future need or condition the department believes that the goals outlined in this plan will address what the department believes will be the future of the Bellaire Police Department.

With these guiding philosophies, the department has created the following objectives.

## DEPARTMENT OBJECTIVES

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The following objectives lists were created using input from the management study completed by Emergency Services Consulting International (ESCI), leadership and planning meetings within the department, and initiatives the department feels will bring the agency up-to-date on emerging best practices. ESCI recommendations will be identified as such.

### Short-Term Objectives

#### Reduce Call for Service Response Times. (ESCI)

The management study determined that officers spend part of their patrol shift checked out at the police station. As a result, responses to calls for service have been delayed with some responses taking up to six minutes or longer. ESCI recommended that officers remain in their assigned districts to reduce response time and increase police visibility.

Officers spending time at the station is a result of the antiquated Report Management System (RMS). There is no functioning interface between the internally networked RMS program and the computers in patrol cars. As a result, when officers are required to complete an offense or crash report they must do so from the desktop computers installed in the officer Report Writing Room. Officers are then checked out at the station for anywhere from thirty minutes to 2 hours writing reports.

The preferred method of report writing is to have individual laptop computers installed via docking stations in the department's patrol fleet. The computers would run the Computer Aided Dispatching (CAD) program as well as have a report writing module with a direct interface to RMS. Officers would have the option of either writing reports in the field from their cars or removing the computers from the car and checking out at an area restaurant, library, or coffee bar to complete these reports. Technology at this time does not permit this method of report writing.

By July 2022 the department will launch a new RMS program: Central Square's Public Safety Suite Pro. This new program will have the features described above and officers will no longer have to report to the station to complete offense and crash reports. These reports may be written from the field.

Key to ensuring that officers will be in their districts ready to respond to emergencies or calls for service will be accountability. This accountability will be in the form of patrol supervisors enforcing "district integrity." District integrity is a rule that requires officers to remain in their assigned districts for the duration of their patrol shift. Absences from their districts should be limited to required administrative functions or when they are needed to assist an officer in a neighboring district. In all other circumstances, officers will be required to remain in their districts. Supervisors will be charged with enforcing this practice.

**The Bellaire Police Department Annual Report Should Be More Informative. (ESCI)**

The management study determined that the department's Annual Report/Year in Review lacked the depth and explanatory material needed for citizens to understand department operations. As part of being a transparent and progressive department, all accomplishments, goals and objectives, statistics, community engagement, new hires, training, use of force, and other pertinent elements should all be provided for review and critique. The annual report should reflect the overall organization and should provide a thorough overview of the year in review.

The department agrees that this is an area for improvement. The latest Year in Review (2020) was largely focused on educating the community on emerging crime trends and had few meaningful statistics and little operational information. Future Year in Reviews will correct this shortcoming.

**The Bellaire Police Department Should Be Reorganized into Three Divisions. (ESCI)**

The management study recommended the department move to a three-tiered structure to alleviate excessive span of control issues and reduce work production demands to a manageable level. The department recognizes that under the organizational structure as it was at the time of the study there was a disparity in span of control. Two Division Commanders were responsible for overseeing operations across the department. While the study recommended a specific structure with three sworn Division Commanders, the department proposed an alternate structure that better meets the needs of the organization.

Effective August 1, 2021 the department instituted the following structure and revised rank names:

**Uniformed Services Division:** comprised of

- Uniformed Services Captain
- Four Lieutenants (Reporting to the Patrol Captain)
- Four Sergeants (Each reporting to one Lieutenant)
- One Jail Attendant (Reporting to a Day Shift Lieutenant)
- One Animal Control Officer (Reporting to a Day Shift Lieutenant)

**Support Services Division:** comprised of

- Support Services Captain
- Detective Lieutenant (Reporting to the Support Services Captain)
- Three full-time Detectives (Reporting to the Detective Lieutenant)
- One Rotating Detective (Reporting to the Detective Lieutenant)
- One Evidence Technician (Reporting to the Detective Lieutenant)
- One Crime Victim Specialist (Reporting to the Detective Lieutenant)
- Two Part-Time Bailiffs (Reporting to the Support Services Captain)
- One Warrant Officer (Reporting to the Support Services Captain)

**Civilian Operations Division:** comprised of

- Civilian Operations Manager
- Nine Telecommunicators (Reporting to the Civilian Operations Manager)
- Two Records Staff (Reporting to the Civilian Operations Manager)

An additional project will be undertaken to create the position of “Lead Telecommunicator” to assist with supervision of the Communications Division and reduce the span of control of the Civilian Operations Manager.

**Police Administration:** comprised of:

- Chief of Police
- Uniformed Services Captain (Reports to Chief)
- Support Services Captain (Reports to Chief)
- Civilian Operations Manager (Reports to Chief)
- Office of Professional Standards Lieutenant (Reports to Chief)
- Administrative Secretary (Reports to Chief)

### The Bellaire Police Department Evidence Room Should Be Expanded. (ESCI)

The management study determined that at its current size, the evidence room was close to full-capacity. ESCI recommended construction of an additional storage site as continued use would push the evidence room beyond its available space.

The department has determined that the evidence room is continuing to store evidence that may no longer be necessary for criminal prosecutions or remain unclaimed. The department recognizes that it has been over two years since the last evidence purge and auction. Such purges and auctioning of unclaimed items clears out unneeded and unclaimed evidence from department storage areas and ensures that sufficient space exists to store new items of evidence.

The department conducted an inventory and audit of the evidence room at the end of July 2021. The results were used to identify those items of evidence that could be purged or auctioned off to free up space in the department’s evidence room. In 2022 the purging of items of evidence is on-going.

### The Bellaire Police Department should redefine its optimum and minimum staffing levels. (ESCI)

ESCI recommended that the department redefine its definition of optimum and minimum staffing levels in regard to the allocation of daily resources. The number of staff allocated for a daily shift should be the optimal amount allowed, as opposed to the minimum staffing, which represents the fewest number of officers required to remain effective. BPD should strive to maintain the optimal level of daily staffing, only falling to the minimum staffing when absolutely necessary.

As of 2022, the designated Patrol minimum staffing is 1 and 3: one supervisor and three patrol officers. An ideal Patrol Shift would consist of 2 and 4: two supervisors and four officers. The current department vacancies have made this increased minimum staffing an unrealistic expectation.

As of April 2022 Patrol staffing shortages include four (4) police officer vacancies, one (1) allocated but unfunded police officer vacancies, and one (1) officer on extended medical leave. Additionally, there are two (2) officers currently assigned to the Field Training Program. The net result is that the department is short eight (8) officers. This shortage has been responsible for most of the department’s overtime usage this fiscal year and will continue

to cause higher-than usual-overtime usage as the department works to maintain the minimum staffing of one supervisor/three officers on each Patrol shift.

When all eight functional vacancies are filled the department will be able to raise the minimum staffing level to 2 and 4. The department will work on recruiting and hiring for the remainder of FY2022 and into the start of FY2023.

### The Bellaire Police Department should establish a citizen academy. (ESCI)

In an effort to leverage community relationships and community support, ESCI recommended that the Bellaire Police Department should institute an annual citizens academy that invites community leaders, business owners, college students, and civic groups to participate in an 8-to-10-week program that educates them on government, criminal justice, the court system, and law enforcement. This educational experience aids in changing the narrative often portrayed. By educating the public on budgets and budget processes, the court system and its function, the police department (administration, criminal investigations, patrol, dispatch, evidence, crime scene, traffic), as well as City functions, those participating have a better understanding of the police department and City government.

The department recognizes that an involved and engaged community created through direct interaction with the police in positive, structured programs is one of the best ways to improve police/community relations. Though the department previously had an assigned Community Outreach Officer, the department did not start a citizen's police academy class.

Effective January 2022 the department assigned a new person to fill the Community Outreach Officer position. One of the priority mandates given was the establishment of a Citizens Police Academy class. The first Citizens Police Academy class was held on March 23, 2022 with graduation anticipated on May 11, 2022.

### The Bellaire Police Department Should Add Communications Supervisors.

The management study discovered that there is only a single supervisor responsible for 24-hour supervision of the Communications Division: the Civilian Operations Manager. The study recommended adding a supervisory position to each Communications shift to ensure adequate supervision and accountability.

As of May 2022 the department has created a selection process for the position of "Lead Telecommunicator." The department will seek to create a method of funding this specialty position and fill the gap in leadership in the Communications Division. The Lead Telecommunicator, or Lead TCO, will be the designated supervisor for each of the four Dispatch shifts. This additional layer of supervision will reduce the Civilian Operations Manager's span of control from eleven to four within the Communications Division.

Lead TCOs will not only reduce the span of control for the Civilian Operations Manager but will also reduce stress related to essentially being on call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to handle supervisory duties within the Communications Division.

### The City of Bellaire Should Add a Telecommunicator Classification to the Public Safety Pay Program. (ESCI)

ESCI noted that dispatchers, like police officers and firefighters, are part of the public safety umbrella and are a critical component of public safety. Because dispatchers are excluded from the Public Safety Pay Program, recruitment, and retention issues, as well as low morale, were reported by employees.

The department agrees that the Telecommunicator Pay Scale should be moved from the City of Bellaire General Pay Plan to the Police Department Pay Plan. The department has submitted a request for this move and recommended that it take place within the City of Bellaire's Pay Plan to be distributed in Fiscal Year 2023.

The move would be accomplished as follows: The existing Police Pay Plan begins with Grade P2. It is recommended that Grade "P1" be created with the Job Title of "Communications Officer." This move ensures that Communications Officers are recognized as first responders in keeping with Texas Legislation passed in 2019.

Texas House Bill 1090 of the 86th Texas Legislature amended Government Code Section 421.095 (1) by adding emergency response operators or emergency services dispatchers to the definition of "First Responder." As first responders and public safety professionals it is the department's contention that Communications Officers be included in the Police Pay Plan.

### **The Communications Center should begin performing regular Quality Assurance procedures as an Industry Best Practice. (ESCI)**

The management study noted that Quality Assurance is not performed because of the structure of the Communications Division. On-duty dispatchers cannot perform this task, and only one Monday through Friday supervisor currently exists within the division. Adding additional supervisors to each shift will allow for more consistency and better recognition of performance within the division.

Currently there is only one line employee/telecommunicator conducting Quality Assurance reviews and even then those reviews are only limited to Emergency Medical Dispatch calls. True Quality Assurance involves regular monitoring of radio traffic, incoming phone calls, call for service slips, all in addition to Emergency Medical Dispatch calls. The addition of Lead TCOs as noted earlier will enable each of the four shifts in dispatch to have a quality assurance manager.

### **The Bellaire Police Department Should Evaluate its Animal Control Program. (ESCI)**

ESCI observed that the Animal Control section of the department is staffed by one officer working a Monday through Friday schedule. Any calls after hours are handled by other officers, and the facility used to house the animals is located outdoors without climate control in a flood zone. If Bellaire Police Department wished to continue with this program, ESCI recommended that we consider upgrading the animal control facilities and gain the ability to perform this function 24 hours per day. Options suggested included interlocal agreements with neighboring cities or Harris County for these services.

The department recognizes the deficiencies in the Animal Control function as noted above. It is believed that the existing facility was constructed sometime in the 1950's though no accurate records exist to that effect. The facility is old and does not provide any climate control at all other than fans in the summer and space heaters in the winter. Additionally, as noted above the facility does lie within a flood zone and at its current elevation is subject to flood.

Using a guide distributed by The Humane Society of the United States, "Shelter Design Packet" (2009) and adjusting for inflation a rough estimate was made for current pound needs. Constructing a new facility at the

existing site conservatively places the price tag at \$430,431 (estimate for an 800 sq. ft. facility housing 6 dogs and 4 cats). Realistically, the cost could be as high as \$567,596. This estimate does not include costs related to raising the structure above the floodplain or annual utility and maintenance costs. While a needed upgrade, funding does not exist for this project in the short-term. Additionally, the intent of the Animal Control function must be evaluated with clear parameters for animal care, treatment, housing terms, and disposition established.

Regarding the hours of the single Animal Control Officer the department contends that there is insufficient workload to justify expanding the department budget to add a second Animal Control Officer at this time. The department hired a new Animal Control Officer in April, 2022. The Animal Control Officer's duty hours are Monday through Friday, 8 AM to 5 PM. Outside of these duty hours line patrol officers are trained in basic trapping, transport, and care of animals in custody at the pound and will continue to be relied upon to perform these duties for the short- and medium-term.

In April, 2022 the department hired a new Animal Control Officer. This new ACO is trained and certified to oversee the animal control function in Bellaire. Among the ACO's new duties will be the identification of animal control shortcomings, process and procedure improvements, and facility improvements. Construction of a new pound on city property is anticipated to take place within FY2023.

### Sustaining or Replacing the Traffic Unit.

The FY2019-FY2021 service plan sought to use increased Patrol staffing to expand the Traffic Unit to include two (2) motorcycle officers and two (2) officers in marked patrol cars. These officers were to be strictly dedicated to traffic enforcement and were intended to manage traffic complaints and work proactively to deter crime in the city.

Traffic is an ever-present concern as is the need to have dedicated traffic officers engaged in active traffic enforcement and traffic calming measures. Today, the Traffic Unit consists of one full-time motorcycle officer; however, the future of the motorcycle officer program must be evaluated. While motorcycle officers have greater mobility, a lower profile, and the speed needed to effectively conduct traffic enforcement duties, there is insufficient interest in sustaining the motorcycle officer program among officers within the department.

Discussions during leadership and planning sessions conducted in early 2021 revealed that other than the existing motorcycle officer, no current Bellaire PD officer is interested in performing traffic enforcement duties on a motorcycle. No officers have been identified that would like to ride a motorcycle for the duration of a patrol shift. Additionally, there is an added expense to the department in maintaining a second motorcycle officer. The department essentially leases the motorcycle from the motor officer and funds the maintenance, repairs, and insurance on the vehicle. The department never 'owns' the motorcycle; as a result, there is no return on investment into this asset. For these reasons the department intends to phase out the motorcycle officer when the current officer retires or resigns.

Future iterations of the Traffic Unit will involve at least two officers assigned to marked patrol vehicles with up to four being preferred. Mid- to long-term funding will seek to add a "low-marked" or ghost-lettered patrol car to serve as the primary Traffic Unit. This low-marked vehicle will be supplemented by officers in standard marked patrol cars.

It is further envisioned that the Traffic Unit serve as a dual-purpose unit. When crime analysis identifies "hot spots," the Traffic Unit would serve as a proactive Hot Spot Unit working to reduce incidents of crime. Hot spots policing

strategies focus on small geographic areas or places where crime is concentrated. When incidents of crime are controlled or reduced, the unit would resume traffic enforcement duties.

### Continued Operation of the Crime Victim Specialist Program

The department currently has a Crime Victim Specialist funded through the Department of Justice Office of Justice Programs Victims of Crime Act block grant. Funding was secured for a three-year grant period starting on October 1, 2019 through September 30, 2022. Under the terms of the grant, this particular grant cannot be renewed.

The Crime Victim Specialist (CVS) position has proven to be a valuable resource not only for the Criminal Investigations Division but also for the entire department. The CVS position is held by a civilian that is a Licensed Professional Counselor who in 2021 is obtained certification under a department initiative to become certified in EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing). EMDR is a psychotherapy that enables people to heal from the symptoms and emotional distress that are the result of traumatic experiences or adverse life experiences. The CVS's specialized skills will make her a valuable asset that the department would seek to retain.

To continue funding the Crime Victim Specialist Program, in December 2021 the department initiated the grant application process through the Department of Justice Victims of Crime Act block grant managed by the State of Texas and administered locally by the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) in January, 2022. In May, 2022 the department was notified that funding has been awarded and the Crime Victim Specialist function will continue in Bellaire. Future funding will continue under the Victims of Crime Act block grant administered by the Houston-Galveston Area Council to ensure no impact on the department budget while still providing a vital service to the department and community.

### Staffing of the Office of Professional Standards

The Office of Professional Standards (OPS) is responsible for a variety of administrative functions within the department. Those responsibilities include: recruitment and selection of future employees; the training of current employees; the investigation of citizen complaints; and administering the department's policy manual. The responsibilities of this position, along with the specific duties of the position mandated by department policy, have required that this Office be continually-staffed.

In mid-Fiscal Year 2022 the department added an additional Lieutenant position to the ranks of police supervision by special order and will seek to include this position in the department's position control log. The intent will be to permanently staff this office on a rotating basis with a police supervisor. This will ensure that duties and responsibilities involved with administration of the department continue unaffected by periodic reduced patrol staffing.

### Phasing Out of Part-Time Officer Program

For several years the department has managed a part-time officer program. This program was intended to supplement existing Patrol staffing with qualified and trained officers able to work patrol shifts with vacancies due to illness, injury, training, or vacations. The department currently staffs two part-time officers; however, police administration has determined that the part-time officer program will be phased out and ultimately discontinued.

The department believes that part-time officers have split loyalty between their regular, full-time jobs and part-time duties performed for Bellaire. When faced with a scheduling conflict, the full-time position will and should always prevail; however, when the full-time position demands make the part-time officer unavailable to staff Bellaire Police vacancies there is no benefit for the department.

There is also inherent liability involved with part-time officers. With no regular attendance at work and no way to consistently monitor off-duty activities, such as ensuring that the prohibition against working extra-duty employment is not violated, part-time officers can potentially expose the department to civil litigation for activities performed while wearing the department's uniform or carrying the department's identification card.

For these reasons the department began phasing out the part-time patrol officer program. One part-time officer was separated effective August 1, 2021 with the second part-time officer to be phased out when he retires or resigns. In the future the department will rely on full-time employees to fill staffing vacancies via overtime or compensatory time.

It should be noted that the department's two Court Bailiffs are part-time officers and will not be phased out under this initiative.

### Increased Training Opportunities for Department Staff and Supervisors

The department recognizes that staffing in a small police agency makes it difficult to create specialized divisions the way larger agencies are free to do. A department the size of Houston PD is able to have specialized divisions such as Traffic Units, DWI Units, Crash Investigations Units, Community Outreach Officers, a Public Relations Unit, and others. An agency the size of Bellaire needs officers to be versatile and adaptable to any situation they encounter. This versatility and adaptability can only be gained through training.

Officers and supervisors need to have the training and skills to be able to perform a variety of duties expected of a police officer in Bellaire. This training comes at a financial cost. The funds available in the FY2021 department training budget will be insufficient to provide all staff members the specialized training they need to perform their duties to the best of their abilities. For FY2022 the department is seeking to increase the training budget by approximately 20%. An increased budget will ensure that sufficient funds exist for staff members to gain the training needed to maximize their skills and increase the level of service the department provides the community.

To further this training initiative, the department will institute mandatory quarterly training sessions for the department. Every three months the department will offer 24 hours (3 days) of mandatory training for the department. Topics will include high frequency/high liability issues such as mechanics of arrest, search and seizure, and de-escalation training. Another high frequency/high liability task that will be covered is emergency vehicle operations (EVO). Though currently lacking an EVO instructor, the department will seek to identify and train internal candidates to provide this training. The same training sessions will repeat every three months to allow the department to schedule attendance for all officers in a way that minimizes the impact to the overtime budget.

Another training initiative for the department involves leadership and management training for department supervisors. Management training will ensure that supervisors have the skills to guide their subordinates to do things right. Leadership training will help supervisors ensure their subordinates are doing the right things. Management and leadership go hand-in-hand for accountability. The department will pursue a culture of accountability to ensure that the department is not only doing things right but is also doing the right things. This culture starts with active and engaged supervisors.

### Purchased Instead of Leased Patrol and Unmarked Staff Cars

In FY2020 the City of Bellaire made the decision to lease rather than purchase police department vehicles. This decision extended to include marked patrol. At the time the department did not feel that such an arrangement would provide a return on investment and in the end would add considerably to the cost of each police patrol vehicle. Additionally, the department was concerned that maintenance and purchasing of replacement parts would become an issue as would the eventual damage and total-loss of a patrol vehicle was a very real possibility. The department took delivery of the first leased patrol vehicles in FY2021. As anticipated, issues arose regarding maintenance and payment of vendors for services performed.

In FY2021 the City of Bellaire leadership made the decision to allow the existing lease contracts to continue through termination. Any patrol vehicles damaged to the point of total-loss would not be replaced through the lease program.

Moving forward the department will seek to replace aging vehicular assets with purchased and not leased vehicles. The department will also seek to expand the pool of patrol cars to allow for the creation of a Day Squad Pool and a Night Squad Pool. Having a total of twelve patrol cars will allow for the department to have five Day Squad cars, five Night Squad cars and two spare cars. These separate pools would keep patrol cars from being run 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and reduce wear and tear and maintenance costs associated with the current 24/7 fleet.

Unmarked staff cars are those vehicles usually assigned to Police Administration and Detectives. These vehicles do not need to be police pursuit vehicles; therefore, the department will seek to replace unmarked staff vehicles with civilian version vehicles. The department anticipates that this change will save approximately \$10,000 per vehicle and allow Detectives to increase their effectiveness while conducting covert surveillance activities.

### Increased Mental Health and Wellness Training and Resources for Staff.

According to some research studies, law enforcement employees are at a higher risk of experiencing anxiety, acute and posttraumatic stress, and depression than any other professions. These stressors have been shown to seriously impact the mental well-being, physical health, and life span of criminal justice professionals. It is believed that programs related to improving mental health and wellness in the workplace can have important positive physiological, psychological, and behavioral effects. These effects can include lower blood pressure, weight loss, improved heart health, decreased stress, decreased depression, and enhanced interpersonal skills and improved work performance.

The department has a responsibility to monitor the mental health and overall wellbeing of its employees. We can no longer deal with post-incident stress by telling officers to “cowboy up.” The department must be proactive in its approach to mental health and wellness; however, this proactivity cannot be haphazard or ‘thrown together.’ We must carefully consider the goals of such programs and how these initiatives are rolled out.

Police Chief Magazine, a publication of the International Association of Chiefs of Police, recommends the following initiatives to consider when crafting mental health and wellness programs:

- “Communication Is Key: It is recommended that leaders, supervisors, and trainers regularly discuss officer mental health during training, roll call, and squad discussions. Officers should be provided with information on topics related to mental health and wellness and available programs and services. Enhancing officers’ knowledge in these areas could increase their willingness to access resources.
- Labels Matter: Law enforcement agencies should take care in how they present programs targeting mental health. Research suggests that labels, communication, and approach can affect officer receptivity to programs. Officers might be more open to programs labeled as “wellness” rather than “stress management” or “treatment.”
- Importance of Social Support: Research consistently identifies social support—perceptions that one is cared for, has assistance available from other people, and is part of a social network—as a critical protective factor against acute stress, including posttraumatic stress. Although limited evidence exists, peer support programs may improve officers’ feelings of social support and overall psychological well-being.
- Enhancing Officer Resilience: Resilience training programs, based on psychological approaches such as cognitive behavioral therapy, have shown success in enhancing mental health and wellness outcomes across different groups of people. Although evidence on training effectiveness in law enforcement settings is limited, programs based on similar techniques could enhance officer wellness.
- Role of Officer Fatigue: Officer fatigue is closely linked to wellness, affecting stress, emotional exhaustion, and overall mental health. Research suggests law enforcement agencies should consider the impact of shift work on officer wellness and fatigue, as the length of a shift has important effects on physical and mental health, quality of life, and work performance.
- Treatment of PTSD: Effective treatment for posttraumatic stress disorder is known, and the American Psychiatric Association has issued guidelines for treatment. Although few research studies examine the impact of this treatment on law enforcement officers, there is some evidence for the effectiveness of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and Brief Eclectic Psychotherapy.” (*Hannah D. McManus, “Officer Wellness Programs—Research Evidence and a Call to Action,” Focus on Officer Wellness, Police Chief (October 2019): 16–17.*)

A key step in preparing for the after-effects of trauma is the previously noted initiative to have the Crime Victim Specialist trained in Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR). Additionally, the mandate for officers to participate in annual Physical Fitness Testing is intended to encourage all officers to exercise and look after their physical health year-round to address and prepare for the physiological effects of stress.

The department intends to form a committee to review current research and craft sustainable mental health and physical wellness programs to help officers minimize on-going stress, perform under pressure, and deal with post-incident stress and depression.

### Purchase and Deployment of Police-Specific Bicycles for the Bike Unit.

Officers on bicycles are a great public relations tool but are also important for conducting low-profile or stealth patrol operations. As a public relations tool, bike officers are more approachable than vehicle-based officers and have greater opportunities to interact with the community at public events such as local festivals. For stealth patrol operations bike officers are smaller, quieter, and have greater mobility than patrol vehicles. These qualities make bike officers ideal for conducting surveillance and approaching property-based criminal offenders such as car or home burglars.

The Bellaire Police Department currently has a team of volunteer Bike Officers and six bicycles; however, these bicycles are inadequate for bike patrol operations. The bike inventory includes three maroon Trek consumer-version mountain bikes, two Marin consumer-version mountain bikes (one black, one gray), and one blue Raleigh M600 Police Mountain Bike. All bicycles are outfitted with consumer-grade lighting that is inadequate for easy identification. Additionally, of the six only the Raleigh bicycle is marked “POLICE.”

The department will seek funding to replace the current stock of police bikes with ruggedized police-specific models. The advantages of police-specific mountain bikes is that they are equipped with severe-duty components that enable them to withstand the rigors of patrol duty and carry the extra weight of police-specific equipment. Additionally, police-specific bikes have engineered mounting points for high-visibility lighting and are clearly marked “POLICE.” Deploying purpose-built bicycles will enhance the look, mobility, and durability of the bike unit and enable regular deployment at city-sponsored functions and use in covert police investigations.

### Acquire a 3-D Laser Scanner for Crash Investigation and Crime Scene Documentation.

The City of Bellaire has thousands of cars passing through the city every day. Inevitably, there are vehicle crashes on all major thoroughfares with the most serious crashes occurring on I-610. High speeds and close quarters mean that there is the potential for crashes on I-610 to be fatal. The police department is responsible for investigating these crashes but currently lacks the equipment to do so effectively and conclusively. The department currently relies on tape measures, distance measuring wheels, and photographs to document fatal vehicle crashes; however, using these tools is time intensive and requires the roadway to be closed down for up to three hours. Lengthy freeway closures increase traffic congestion and increase the amount of time officers are exposed to potential injury from motorists passing crash scenes. There are tools available to make crash investigation quicker and safer.

Prior to 2022, the department relied on outside agencies with 3-D scanners to assist with crash and crime scene investigations; however, those agencies were not always available and when they are, the time it takes for them to arrive requires roadways to be closed even longer. With an in-house, department-owned scanner trained officers can deploy the scanner at a scene in 15 minutes or less.

To realize this time and technology improvement, in December, 2021 the department made application to the Bellaire Police and Fire Foundation to fund the purchase a FARO mobile 3-D scanner for use in fatal crash reconstruction and crime scene investigation. Use of a 3-D scanner for investigation and reconstruction of crashes is faster and more accurate than the pen-and-paper method previously employed by the department. Being able to quickly collect and diagram a scene is critical to officer safety and ensures physical evidence is accurately captured. A 3-D scanner can accurately diagram a crash scene in thirty minutes or less compared to 3 hours. Additionally, on those rare occasions that serious crimes occur in Bellaire a 3-D scanner is critical to preserving evidence and ensuring a crime scene can be recreated later for court prosecutions.

The Bellaire Police and Fire Foundation granted the funding request and the department took delivery of the equipment in early 2022.

### Suppressed Rifles for Patrol Officers.

The City of Bellaire is surrounded by the densely-populated urban City of Houston. Its proximity to a large city means that Bellaire can fall victim to large city crime, especially violent crimes. The department must be prepared to respond to incidents of violent crimes to protect the lives of its citizens and officers. To that end the department

has purchased suppressed rifles for issue to patrol officers so that uniformed officers are prepared to respond to incidents such as active shooter events, armed robberies, and other violent criminal incidents.

There is a distinct advantage of using a suppressed rifle in an urban environment. When an officer needs to deploy a rifle quickly he is unable to also don hearing protection. A suppressed rifle reduces the sound of a gunshot by as much as 35 decibels or roughly the equivalent of wearing earplugs. An officer then does not have the after-effects of tinnitus, temporary loss of hearing, or long-term hearing damage that can result from firing a weapon without ear protection. Additionally, when responding to active shooter events indoors a suppressed rifle reduces bystander hearing loss and ensures the officer maintains his hearing as he searches for offenders. Finally, suppressed rifles have less recoil and are more accurate when follow-up shots are needed. In a highly-populated area as Bellaire, ensuring that shots go on target is critical for community safety.

The department purchased suppressed rifles from the Article 59 Seizure fund and deployed them in early 2022.

### Expand the Role of the Community Outreach Officer.

Prior to 2022, the Bellaire Police Department's Community Outreach function had limited external programs and few annual events. Focus was limited to programs such as Touch-a-Truck, National Night Out, Fire Truck Pull, child car seat installation, and community presentations to schools and childcare centers. After a review of these activities, the department determined that the position was not meeting community wants or needs and had considerable room for improvement.

With the change in administration, the department has prioritized community outreach as a way to earn citizen involvement and engagement. A new Community Outreach Officer was assigned in late 2021 and he received the mandate to initiate new programs and citizen engagement initiatives to increase transparency and boost community involvement in the police department.

One of the first initiatives was Coffee with a Cop, a program highlighting local businesses and providing a monthly venue for the community to interact with police officers. Additional initiatives have included the department's first Citizens Police Academy class as well as Police and PE, a program where officers engage with students at elementary schools during PE class.

Additional future initiatives are anticipated as current activities have earned positive community support. Ideas being considered for future community engagements include:

- 911 Education Class
- Bullying Awareness
- Police-Community Council
- Community Walks
- Cram the Cruiser Supply Drives
- Emergency Preparedness
- Homeless Outreach
- Police Explorers

## Mid-Term Objectives

### Creation and Deployment of K-9 Units.

Bellaire has several major thoroughfares running through the heart of the city. As officers make traffic stops on these thoroughfares are frequented by individuals with contraband such as drugs or weapons. Additionally, when police encounter criminal offenders some may attempt to evade capture by fleeing on foot. When patrol officers encounter these incidents, they rely on outside agencies to bring in their K-9 to assist.

K-9s are police dogs specially trained to assist police with searching for drugs and explosives, tracking people, and recovering evidence. The most common breeds for police dogs or K9s are Belgian Malinois and German Shepherds. The department will seek funding to acquire police K9s and form a K9 Unit for the Bellaire Police Department.

The department will limit K9 activities to narcotic detection, tracking, and explosives detection. The department will not acquire or train a dog as an attack or “bite” dog. Ideally, the department would seek two K9s for its initial program rollout with one assigned to a Day Squad and the second assigned to a Night Squad. This will ensure 24-hour coverage for the city should a K9 be needed on Patrol or to assist with investigations.

In 2022 the department approached the Bellaire Police and Fire Foundation to gauge interest in funding this program outright. Initial feedback from the foundation has indicated that pending final cost the foundation will entertain funding this initiative. The program will not be initiated until the department has filled vacant positions in the Patrol Division.

### Secure Parking for Staff Vehicles.

The rise in “citizen activism” has meant increased scrutiny and probing of police facilities. Individuals self-identified as “First Amendment auditors” frequently photograph and film police facilities from public spaces to “audit” or “test” how the agency will respond. Under the First and Fourth Amendments, government is prohibited from infringing on an individual’s audio or visual recording in public spaces (freedom of speech) and prohibited from seizing any such recordings made (search and seizure).

The probing of police facilities include the photography of police personnel’s personally-owned vehicles. At the last First Amendment audit in Bellaire that occurred in April, 2021 the “auditors” went so far as to photograph the interior of staff member’s personal vehicles. The department will seek to safeguard against the direct photographing and potential tampering of police staff’s privately owned vehicles.

The department envisions a controlled-access fencing and vehicle entry gates at the parking area immediately adjacent to the water tower on Rice at Jessamine to secure department staff vehicles. Automatic gates would be installed at the two driveways and an eight-foot-high chain link fence would surround the parking area to prevent unauthorized access. Privacy filters would be installed on the fencing to limit the view of vehicles.

### Animal Pound Improvements Including Internet Cameras

Discussed in the short-term goals section was the potential cost of replacing the existing Animal Pound. In the mid-term the department will seek funding for pound improvements. It is important to note that these improvements are intended only to improve the current level of service provided to the city, not to transform the Animal Pound into a Shelter. As previously discussed in short-term objectives, the department does not anticipate the needs of lost or stray animals in Bellaire to rise to the level of shelter operations in the mid-term.

The improvements to the pound will include replacement of the existing structure with a structure containing space for up to six dogs. The department envisions the structure also having a single office but does not envision this office to be staffed 24-hours a day by an animal control officer. Doing so would require the addition of civilian staff that the department feels will be unnecessary in the mid-term.

In addition to a new structure, the department will seek to add internet-based cameras that will allow remote monitoring of animals in the department's care. Cameras will be monitored after-hours and on weekends by the Communications Division only when animals are in the department's care. At all other times the cameras will be set to record for security purposes.

### Addition of a Civilian Quartermaster.

As the department's personnel and physical assets grow, there will continue to be a need for staff to monitor and care for these assets. Currently department supervisors are tasked with the part-time monitoring of these assets; however, this part-time function has inevitably led to incidents of required maintenance not being performed or supplies depleted without replacement.

To alleviate this issue the department will seek to add a civilian staff position of Quartermaster. The Quartermaster would be responsible for the general oversight of the police department's equipment and supply function which includes: issuing equipment and other supplies to department personnel, identifying and evaluating "police specific" equipment, making equipment and supply purchases, maintaining inventory records, and care and maintenance of department vehicles. This position would be scheduled Monday through Friday during business hours. To reduce the impact on the department budget the police department may consider partnering with the Bellaire Fire Department to fund the position. A Quartermaster could be split between departments as both departments have similar equipment and vehicle needs.

### Involvement in Proactive Area Law Enforcement Task Forces.

Once all vacancies have been filled and the department is fully staffed, the department envisions being able to assign Bellaire Police Officers to area task forces such as the local Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Organized Crime Task Force. Involvement in task forces benefits the host federal agency by providing local personnel familiar with local geography, crimes, and laws. The federal agency is also able to staff the task force with no costs related to salaries; task force member salaries are funded by the local agency.

The agency would benefit from the arrangement by enabling member officers to receive training and experience that otherwise would not be available. Officers returning from task force assignments are better prepared to handle advanced street-level investigations and are able to provide better service to the community. Task force officers also have access to federal resources that could be used to conduct local investigations. Additionally, the department would receive a portion of seized assets recovered by its officers during the course of their assignment.

### Creation of a Gym in the Existing Shell Space.

When the current public safety building was constructed a “shell space” or unimproved interior area was left for future expansion. The shell space is located on the second floor and occupies the area immediately above the courtroom. The shell space ceiling height is approximately 15 feet and measures approximately 28 feet wide and 48 feet long. The space is currently being used as a storeroom. The space is a ‘blank slate’ and can be built out to almost any purpose the department envisions.

The department envisions converting half of this shell space into a fitness room to supplement the existing weight room. The department would construct a wall with doors along the width of the space to create a smaller storeroom measuring approximately 16 feet by 28 feet. In the remaining area of 28 feet by 32 feet the department would leave the center empty and install padding on the floor. Around the perimeter the department would install body-weight focused exercise stations and cardio machines. The empty area could then be used for yoga or other strength training as well as defensive tactics training.

### Firearms Range Improvements

The department enjoys a close working relationship with the owners of Texas Pipe and Supply and through this relationship was able to construct a department firearms range at the Texas Pipe and Supply facility on Bellfort Ave. in Houston. The range is approximately 60 yards long and was constructed for both pistol and rifle use. When originally built a number of years ago, the department installed remotely-controlled turning targets at the backstop and also installed steel targets for training and qualifications use. Over time, the remotely-controlled turning targets have gradually deteriorated and require frequent repair. Additionally, the turning-only targets allow for limited training variations.

The department will seek funding to replace the existing target turning system with a more durable, weather resistant solution that will enable prolonged use and decrease the incidents of malfunctions. The department will supplement the target turning system with longitudinal target retrievers and mobile target ‘robots’ that can move laterally and longitudinally. While the department prays that officer-involved shooting incidents are few and far between, having an up-to-date firearms range will ensure that officers will be prepared to respond when needed.

### Facility Reconfiguration

By 2022 the department has already outgrown portions of the facility. The Patrol Supervisor offices were constructed for supervisors assigned to three eight-hour shifts. There are three offices for second-line supervisors and one office for the three first-line supervisors to share. Effective August 1, 2021 the department moved to officers working four 12-hour shifts. Each shift has one first-line supervisor and one second-line supervisor. This meant that in its original configuration the Patrol Supervisor offices are inadequate.

In FY 2022 the department expanded available office space by converting the first-line supervisor shared office into a second-line supervisor office. The department converted the Roll Call conference room into a four-person office for shift Sergeants. Four cubicles or workspaces were created within the former conference room so that each first-line supervisor could have their own area. Roll calls are conducted in the same space as there is adequate room for briefing.

In calendar year 2022 the department will reconfigure the second-floor Administrative hallway. The hallway was constructed with a central open work area in which office supplies such as bulk boxes of paper and other items are

stored. This work area also houses the second-floor copier. The open storage area is unsightly due to it frequently being cluttered. Attempts to maintain order in the space are difficult due to limited areas for out-of-sight storage.

The department proposes converting an existing conference room also located in the Administrative hallway into a storeroom. This conference room has a door and is better suited as a storeroom. The conference room has sufficient networking to allow for the reposition of the copier into the space and is of sufficient size that shelving and storage cabinets can be installed to hold supplies.

The work area would then be converted to a conference room. Existing shelving and cabinets would be removed. A conference table and chairs will be placed in the space with a monitor installed on the wall. Finally, a portable wall unit with a sliding door would be installed across the opening for privacy.

The department will also add a portable wall unit to the work room area in the Criminal Investigations Division to also create a conference room. The previous conference room had been converted to an office for the Detective Lieutenant.

### Re-Enter the Process to Become a Texas Recognized Agency

The Texas Police Chiefs Association Foundation (TPCAF) maintains a Best Practices Recognition Program. This voluntary program rates an agency's directives and practices against 166 identified best practices standards. These standards were developed by Texas Law Enforcement professionals to assist agencies in the efficient and effective delivery of service, the reduction of risk, and the protection of individual's rights. While similar in nature to the national accreditation program, the Best Practices Recognition Program is designed specifically for Texas Law Enforcement Agencies.

Bellaire PD had previously entered the recognition program in 2017; however, the department was unable to meet documentation deadlines and dropped out. The department's current General Orders manual aligns with TPCAF best practices guidelines and the department believes achieving Recognized status will occur in the near future.

### Expansion of the Existing ALPR Program

In 2022 Bellaire Police Department maintains a network of 18 stationary and two mobile automatic license plate reader (ALPR) cameras in the city. These cameras were placed at strategic locations; specifically, the entrances to the city on major thoroughfares. These cameras have been extremely successful in identifying wanted vehicles and providing investigative leads for detectives.

The department will seek to expand the existing program from 20 (20) cameras to twenty-six (26). As with the original deployment, these additional six cameras would be placed at strategic locations covering major entrances to the city.

Mobile versions of the cameras are anticipated to be a benefit to the department. Mobile cameras, installed on existing radar trailers, could be deployed in areas where crime "hot spots" have been occurring, such as areas with increased numbers of car burglaries, porch package thefts, or other property crimes. The mobile ALPRs link to the existing network and provide real-time data on vehicle license plates for use in criminal investigations.

## Long-Term Objectives

The Bellaire Police Department should hire additional sworn and non-sworn staff to allow for a three-tiered organizational structure. (ESCI)

The management study recommended that the department increase staffing to support a three-tiered structure as described in Short-Term Objectives. The implementation of a three-tiered structure would allow the department to incrementally increase the number of supervisors, detectives, dispatchers, and officers during the next five years. This gradual implementation provides the city with time to budget for the increased staff.

ESCI made the following sworn staffing recommendations:

2021 Actual		2022 Recommended		2023 Recommended		2024 Recommended		2025 Recommended	
1	Chief of Police	1	Chief of Police	1	Chief of Police	1	Chief of Police	1	Chief of Police
1	Assistant Police Chief	1	Assistant Police Chief	1	Assistant Police Chief	1	Assistant Police Chief	1	Assistant Police Chief
2	Captain	*3	Captain	3	Captain	3	Captain	3	Captain
4	Lieutenant	*6	Lieutenant	6	Lieutenant	6	Lieutenant	6	Lieutenant
3	Sergeant	*4	Sergeant	4	Sergeant	4	Sergeant	4	Sergeant
4	Detective	4	Detective	4	Detective	*5	Detective	5	Detective
25	Officer	25	Officer	*27	Officer	*29	Officer	29	Officer
1	Bailiffs	1	Bailiffs	1	Bailiffs	1	Bailiffs	1	Bailiffs
.5	Warrant Ofc	.5	Warrant Ofc	.5	Warrant Ofc	.5	Warrant Ofc	.5	Warrant Ofc

As sworn the number of sworn positions within a police department increases, so does the need for support staff. ESCI recommends the following non-sworn staffing increases.

2021 Actual		2022 Recommended		2023 Recommended		2024 Recommended		2025 Recommended	
1	Crime Victim	1	Crime Victim	1	Crime Victim	1	Crime Victim	1	Crime Victim
2	Records	2	Records	2	Records	2	Records	2	Records
1	Comms Supervisor	1	Comms Supervisor	1	Comms Supervisor	1	Comms Supervisor	1	Comms Supervisor
10.5	Dispatch	*11	Dispatch	*12	Dispatch	12	Dispatch	12	Dispatch
1	Secretary	1	Secretary	1	Secretary	1	Secretary	1	Secretary
1	Evidence	1	Evidence	2	Evidence	2	Evidence	2	Evidence
0	Accreditation	0	Accreditation	1	Accreditation	1	Accreditation	1	Accreditation

The department agreed with ESCI's assessment that increased staffing is necessary. The ability for a police department to accomplish its mission of serving and protecting the community depends on the staffing levels of sworn and civilian employees. With increased staffing, a police department has the ability to expand beyond the police patrol and investigative functions and undertake specialized initiatives such as the establishment of a Traffic Unit, assignment of a Crime Analyst, or the creation of a Police K-9 Unit.

Historically the Bellaire Police Department has not been allocated or authorized additional officers to allow for expansion beyond patrol or investigative functions. Creative scheduling of existing staffing has allowed for the short-term establishment of a Traffic Unit with two officers; however, such a unit draws down staffing from the patrol squads resulting in staffing at or below desired shift minimums.

The department agrees with the conclusion that additional staffing are necessary and has made some adjustments to the recommendations. First, for sworn officers the recommendation was to add one Lieutenant and create a new division. As noted in Short-Term Objectives, the department has this third division led by the Civilian Operations Manager. FY2023 and beyond recommendations for staffing are in line with department projections.

With additional sworn officers the department would be able to more effectively schedule personnel and reduce overtime usage. Additional officers would enable the Patrol Division to spend more time in direct community engagement and education efforts under a Relational Policing model.

Instead of employing an accreditation manager the department would instead fill this position with a civilian Crime Analyst. A crime analyst would be able to assist the department in reaching its goal of employing the Data Driven Approach to Crime and Traffic Safety model for intelligence-led policing.

### Add a Civilian Crime Analyst.

The department will seek to move more fully to adopt the policing model known as DDACTS, or Data-Driven Approaches to Crime and Traffic Safety. DDACTS is a law enforcement operational model that integrates location-based crime and traffic crash data to determine the most effective methods for deploying law enforcement and other resources. Drawing on the deterrent value of highly visible traffic enforcement and the knowledge that crimes often involve motor vehicles, the goal of DDACTS is to reduce crime, crashes, and traffic violations across the city.

Using geo-mapping to identify “hot spots”—areas of high incidence of crimes and crashes—DDACTS uses targeted traffic enforcement strategies that play two roles in fighting crime and reducing crashes and traffic violations. The model responds to the competing demands for police services that the department faces every day. Key to the successful implementation of the DDACTS model will be the addition of a civilian crime analyst.

The crime analyst will collect, analyze, and disseminate information related to crime trends and traffic “hot spots” to Patrol and Investigations. The analyst will also work closely with officers and detectives to formulate proactive strategies to eliminate the identified trends.

Currently these duties are being performed on a part-time basis by department supervisors. It is believed that by having a dedicated and trained analyst, data and recommendations for crime reduction strategies will be more accurate and timely.

### Expand the Evidence Technician Duties to Include Crime Scene Processing.

The position of Evidence Technician is currently held by a civilian employee. The current Evidence Technician’s duties involve strictly the care, custody, and transport of evidence held by the Bellaire Police Department. The department envisions expanding the duties of the technician to include crime scene investigation and evidence process.

Expanding the Evidence Technician's duties will involve the added expense of funding specialty crime scene investigation (CSI) training. Training courses would include:

- 
- Basic Criminal Investigation
- Crime Scene Investigation
- Forensic Photography I
- Latent Print Processing
- Bloodstain Pattern Analysis
- Forensic Photography II
- Processing Evidence of Violent Crimes
- Death Investigation
- Skeletal Death Investigation (Elective)
- Forensic Entomology (Elective)
- Forensic Fire Fatality Investigation (Elective)
- Courtroom Testimony

Completion of all of the above courses (only one elective) would certify an individual as a Forensic Investigator II. All functions of a crime scene investigator could then be completed by the new dual-duty Evidence and Crime Scene Technician. There would be an additional cost related to an anticipated increase in salary as well as a need to adjust the department's overtime budget to anticipate after-hours and weekend call-outs for evidence collection duties.

Having a trained Forensic Investigator on staff will eliminate the need to have outside agencies assist with evidence collection and improve the integrity of evidence collected from crime scenes.

## FINANCES

### Budget









Department/Fund	FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Budget	FY 2022 Original Budget	FY 2022 Projection
Salaries	4,527,889	4,419,728	4,367,744	4,337,153
Benefits	1,691,915	1,672,639	1,841,794	1,761,680
Professional Services	16,127	41,119	60,520	74,026
Maintenance	68,006	56,465	75,652	70,420
Contractual Services	82,583	80,879	124,702	125,352
Materials & Supplies	218,643	221,250	250,168	232,049
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>6,605,163</b>	<b>6,492,081</b>	<b>6,720,580</b>	<b>6,600,680</b>

### Fiscal Forecast

Department/Fund	FY 2023 Projection	FY 2024 Projection
Salaries	\$4,453,965	\$4,520,775
Benefits	\$1,821,862	\$1,849,190
Professional Services	\$27,831	\$28,249
Maintenance	\$76,787	\$77,939
Contractual Services	\$126,573	\$128,471
Materials & Supplies	\$253,921	\$257,729
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$6,760,938</b>	<b>\$6,862,352</b>

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The performance measures summarized below reflect service levels for the department. They are objective measures which are directly related to Council Priorities. These measures are statistical in nature and may not accurately reflect department productivity or effectiveness in the community. “Productivity” and “effectiveness” are intangibles that are difficult to measure using statistical data alone.

Relevant Council Priority	Guiding Principal	Departmental Goal/Objective	Performance Measure	2019 Actual	2020 Actual	2021 Actual	2022 Projected
Public Safety 	A Safe Community	Professional Standards	Calls for Service handled by Dispatch	32,167	29,935	29,094	30,548
Public Safety 	A Safe Community	Field-Based Investigations	Response time for non-emergency calls (in seconds)	267	283	315	299
Public Safety 	A Safe Community	Field-Based Investigations	Top Priority calls: Average time, dispatch to arrival on scene (in seconds)	262	217	203	192
Public Safety 	A Safe Community	Crash Investigation	Number of traffic crashes	739	437	551	575
Public Safety 	A Safe Community	Arrest of Offenders	Cases assigned to Criminal Investigations Division	405	368	509	534
Public Safety 	A Safe Community	Arrest of Offenders	Cases cleared by Criminal Investigations Division	136	143	155	162
Public Safety 	A Safe Community	Professional Standards	Officer training hours	670	0	344	860
Public Safety 	A Safe Community	Community Engagement	Community presentations /engagements	5	9	14	35

## APPENDIX: STATUS OF FY2019-FY2021 SERVICE PLAN ACTION ITEMS

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The FY2019 – FY2021 Service Plan identified action items the department would seek to address or prepare for within the identified years. This service plan was created in 2018 and reflected issues of concern through the lens of that time. A summary of the action item will be followed by the outcome or resolution of the initiative.

### Municipal Jail Construction

The department forecasted the possibility that municipal jails would have to comply with State Jail Standards regarding staffing, facilities, and prisoner care. The department acknowledged that while these standards were consulted not every requirement could be met due to funding issues. In addition to design issues the department identified a potential need to staff the jail facility 24-hours a day, 7 days a week. The additional expense of adding personnel was of concern as adding additional staff could increase the overall department budget.

The public safety building construction project was completed in January 2019 with the jail constructed and intended as a short-term holding facility. Construction of the facility is substantially in compliance with jail standards as of 2019. Should future legislation mandate that municipal jails meet State jail standards only minimal upgrades should be needed.

### Succession Planning

In 2018 the Assistant Chief of Police retired from the Bellaire Police Department. Due to the lack of experienced and skilled mid-line supervisors prepared for greater responsibility, no internal candidate was qualified for promotion. At that time the department identified the need to invest in training and mentoring department supervisory staff to prepare them for successive rank and increased responsibility; however, the need did exist to replace the Assistant Chief. The department initiated an external selection process to select the next Assistant Chief with the intent of that candidate later being promoted to Chief of Police upon the retirement of Chief Byron Holloway.

In January 2019 the department hired Onesimo Lopez, a 24-year law enforcement veteran from the City of Pearland to be the next Assistant Chief of Police. Following a familiarization and training period, in 2021 Chief Holloway announced his retirement effective date as July 31, 2021. Assistant Chief Lopez was selected to fill the Chief of Police position and his appointment was effective August 2, 2021.

Regarding succession planning, in 2021 the department has undertaken an unstructured mentoring program for supervisors which includes monthly supervisor development training.

### National Incident Based Reporting

The department acknowledged that effective January 2021 the FBI would require agencies to report crime data in the updated National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS) format instead of the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) format. NIBRS collects data on a wider range of criminal offenses than UCR and also collects data regarding victims, offenders, and several other data points providing a more detailed picture of crime occurring within

jurisdictions. The department's demographic data on victims, offenders, arrests, and such. The department's reliance on TriTech Software's outdated InformRMS platform was built for the UCR format and subsequently made the department unable to accurately report NIBRS data.

In late-2020 the department initiated a project to update the aging report management system to enable the department to report NIBRS data as required. The department contracted with Central Square to run their Public Safety Suite Pro software package. The department expects to deploy the updated system by July 2022.

## Personnel

The 2019-2021 service plan noted that in Fiscal Year 1983 Bellaire Police Department Budget showed 38 authorized police officer positions. minimum patrol shift operation levels that year were one (1) supervisor and two (2) patrol officers. In contrast, the Fiscal Year 2017 budget showed 39 authorized positions with minimum patrol shift levels being one (1) supervisor and three (3) patrol officers. While the city population, traffic, and crime saw a steady increase the staffing level of the department did not keep pace with these increases.

In Fiscal Year 2021 the department still reflected 39 authorized positions and patrol staffing still reflects a one supervisor/three officer minimum staffing. This staffing level remains insufficient and was not adequately addressed through the previous service plan.

## Traffic Unit

Increasing personnel in the FY2019-FY2021 service plan was intended to allow for the creation of a dedicated Traffic Unit consisting of two (2) motorcycle officers and two (2) officers in marked patrol cars. These officers were to be strictly dedicated to traffic enforcement and were intended to manage traffic complaints and work proactively to deter crime in the city.

In 2022 the Traffic Unit consists of one full-time motorcycle officer. Decreased staffing due to injuries and illnesses as well as police officer vacancies had made it difficult to assign a second officer to the unit.

## Improved Hiring and Retention

In 2018 the department identified the need to improve its retention of officers within the department. Due to limited opportunities to transfer out of patrol, many younger officers were leaving the department and taking career opportunities at larger agencies that offered a better chance of movement out of Patrol. The department sought to increase staffing and thereby increase specialized positions in the Traffic Unit, Detectives, and also allow for the creation of other specialized functions within the department.

As of 2022 the department still experiences some turnover; however, due partly to increased pay realized in 2016 and a changing department culture fewer officers are seeking employment elsewhere. Persistent decreased staffing due to injury, illness, and vacant positions makes it difficult to create the specialized positions envisioned in 2018 to provide movement out of Patrol.

## Increase Communications Division Staffing

Decreased staffing was identified as a concern in the FY2019-FY2021 service plan. The minimum staffing per shift in Communications was two telecommunicators; however, at times when call volume was determined to be heaviest an effort was made to schedule an additional telecommunicator. Decreased staffing in the division required an increased use of overtime to stretch the available staff enough to meet these minimum staffing levels with three assigned at peak times the exception rather than the norm.

By 2022 the Communications Division was expanded to nine authorized telecommunicators and three part-time employees. As of April 2022 the Communications Division has been understaffed. There are two openings for full-time positions and one opening for a part-time employee. This decreased staffing has required additional overtime expenses and future scheduling of available staff remains a point of concern.

## Improved Investigative Case Management

The department identified the need to increase staffing of the Criminal Investigations Division to more equitably spread out the workload of cases assigned for follow-up investigation. Decreased staffing in 2018 meant that no expansion beyond the four assigned detectives was possible.

A project was initiated in early 2021 to create case solvability criteria to more readily identify those cases with greater chances of being solved. This project was intended to increase the efficiency of the unit and remains in progress. The ability to more effectively review and assign cases is critical given the decreased number of detectives currently working in the division. In 2022 while there were still four detectives authorized for to the Criminal Investigations Division, due to decreased Patrol staffing only two full-time detectives and the rotating detective position are filled.

## Road Construction Issues

The Texas Department of Transportation initiated the I-69 and I-610 West Loop Interchange Reconstruction project in 2018. At that time the department forecasted that road closures, lane redirection, and other traffic disruptions would increase congestion in and around Bellaire.

In 2022 the I-69 and I-610 West Loop construction project is still ongoing. There has been increased congestion on I-610 which the department anticipates will continue until the project has been completed. The published anticipated completion date for the project is May 2024.