

**Overcoming the Challenges and
Creating a Regional Approach to Policing
in St. Louis City and County**

A report by the Police Executive Research Forum

April 30, 2015



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PURPOSE AND METHODOLOGY

In the summer of 2014, Better Together¹ initiated discussions with the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) to conduct a study of the state of policing in the City and County of St. Louis. The August 9, 2014, fatal shooting of Michael Brown by Ferguson Police Officer Darren Wilson, and the civil unrest that ensued, gave new urgency to this initiative. In September 2014, Better Together and PERF entered into an agreement to conduct this examination and issue a report with recommendations.

PERF is an independent research organization, based in Washington, DC, that focuses on critical issues in policing. PERF identifies best policies and practices on fundamental issues, such as strategies to minimize police use of force; developing community policing and increasing public perceptions of legitimacy and procedural justice in policing; new technologies for improving police accountability, such as body-worn cameras; and civil rights and racial issues in policing.²

The purpose of the study is two-fold:

1. To examine how policing services are currently being delivered in St. Louis County/City, assess the state of police-community relations, and compare the status quo with best practices in the policing profession.
2. To provide recommendations for moving forward, including identifying policing models and operational options to improve policing in the region.

RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

For this study, PERF carried out a variety of research activities:

- **Town Hall Meetings:** Better Together sponsored a series of Town Hall Meetings in various parts of region, including St. Louis City, Bridgeton, Des Peres, University City, unincorporated North County, and unincorporated South County. We heard from hundreds of residents, community leaders, elected representatives, and others who participated in these town halls.

¹ Better Together describes itself as “a grassroots project born in response to growing public interest in the fragmented nature of local government throughout St. Louis City and County, which dates back to 1876, when St. Louis City broke away from St. Louis County.” It is sponsored by the Missouri Council for a Better Economy. <http://www.bettertogetherstl.com/about>

² See www.policeforum.org. Many of PERF’s reports on these issues are available online at <http://www.policeforum.org/free-online-documents>.

- **Focus groups:** We convened targeted focus group meetings, to probe in greater detail the perspectives of different sectors of the community, including municipal government representatives, community leaders, police officials, school administrators, youths, and others.
- **Interviews:** We held individual meetings with key stakeholders, including community leaders, elected representatives, law enforcement officers and executives, police union leaders, legal experts, members of the clergy, news media, and others.
- **Data collection and analysis:** We conducted a wide-ranging data collection and analysis effort that examined population and demographic trends; police department organization, staffing, and costs; and reported crimes and calls for service, where available.
- **Literature review:** We completed an extensive review of prior research, including studies of the municipal courts, the U.S. Department of Justice Investigation of the Ferguson Police Department, other research reports, Missouri State statutes and regulations, and articles by the St. Louis and national news media.

KEY FINDINGS

- **There are high rates of crime in St. Louis City and many cities in St. Louis County.**
- **High crime rates are costly:** The total cost of Part I crime in St. Louis City and County combined—including victim, criminal justice, and community costs—was estimated to exceed \$1.5 billion in 2013, or \$1,187 for every resident of the city and county.
- **Costs of police services:** The cost of police services in the St. Louis region is \$355 per person.
- **Policing is extremely fragmented:** St. Louis County contains a patchwork of police departments, many of which have jurisdiction over very small areas. About one-third of the municipalities in the County that have a police department occupy less than one square mile. This has led to confusion and distrust among residents, who often feel targeted and harassed by police officers and the municipal court system.
- **Fragmentation undermines effective policing:** The fragmentation of policing is inefficient, undermines police operations, and makes it difficult to form effective law enforcement partnerships to combat crime locally and regionally.
- **Many police departments have inappropriate goals:** In many municipalities, policing priorities are driven not by the public safety needs of the community, but rather by the goal of generating large portions of the operating revenue for the local government. This is a grossly inappropriate mission for the police, often carried out at the direction of local elected officials.
- **Community policing is lacking in many cities where it is needed most:** Even though residents consistently say they want their police departments to engage in more community-oriented policing, this approach is de-emphasized or non-existent in many jurisdictions, especially in communities with high levels of crime and deep distrust between residents and police.

- **The “muni shuffle” is unprofessional:** Police standards, training, pay, and professionalism vary dramatically throughout the region. Of particular concern is the so-called “muni shuffle,” in which police officers who are fired or allowed to resign because of disciplinary or performance issues in one department are quickly hired by another department, because it can be less expensive to hire an experienced (albeit compromised) officer than to recruit and train a new officer.
- **Police standards vary dramatically from agency to agency:** Throughout our study, we heard concerns about the lack of standards and consistency from agency to agency in terms of policies, practices, training, and pay. This issue was raised by police professionals, municipal leaders, members of the news media, community leaders, and individual residents. Just one-quarter of the police departments in St. Louis City and County are accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) or certified by the Missouri Police Chiefs Charitable Foundation.
- **Concerns about race permeate the justice system:** Race is an issue that permeates almost every aspect of policing and justice in St. Louis City and County. Concerns over racial tensions and racial bias were raised throughout the course of this study, especially by African-Americans and young people. The failure to address the racial issues in policing is holding back progress.
- **These issues are hurting St. Louis:** All of these issues together are undermining the quality of policing services and harming the reputation of St. Louis City and County. The future safety, economic health, and vitality of the region will require not only addressing the immediate problems today, but also creating new approaches and better systems that are recognized as national “best practices.”

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation #1: Create a regional police training center and conduct joint City-County training exercises.

We recommend that St. Louis City and County combine their resources to create a single state-of-the-art police training center that would offer basic, in-service, and advanced training for all police officers in the City and County. A combined academy would provide an advanced and forward-looking approach to training and education, tailored to the needs of police officers throughout St. Louis City and County.

Recommendation #2: Establish a set of regional standards covering critical policies, practices, and operations that will enhance quality and professionalism.

We recommend reforms in several areas, including the following:

Hiring standards. All officers hired by a municipal or County police department should undergo a full psychological screening by a County-approved psychiatrist or psychologist. New hires

should also receive a full background investigation. In addition, departments should use a polygraph (or other comparable test) to detect deception. Finally, all police departments should contact Missouri POST to review the license status and any known disciplinary history of potential hires before making an offer of employment.

Training standards. The current state requirement of 48 hours of continuing education over a three-year reporting period is insufficient to maintain and enhance the skills needed for policing excellence. Instead, officers in St. Louis City and County should be required to complete a minimum of 40 hours of in-service training each year.

Use-of-force policies. Departments should re-engineer their use-of-force training and adopt model policies that include de-escalation of force whenever possible; requiring officers to intervene if they witness another officer using excessive force; requiring that all use-of-force incidents be recorded on a standard form that will support data collection and analysis; and requiring thorough investigation of all officer-involved shootings, whether or not the subject was hit, seriously injured, or died as a result.

Recommendation #3: Create a multi-agency Compstat program to identify and analyze cross-border crime problems, and a regional Major Case Squad to combat these problems.

Compstat is a data-driven performance management system that is used by police departments to reduce crime and achieve other public safety goals. A regional Compstat program would help the police agencies in St. Louis City and County to work together in a proactive way to address these issues of fragmented responses to crime.

We also recommend creation of a regional Major Case Squad to address the crime patterns and repeat offenders uncovered through Compstat. The Major Case Squad would include investigators from multiple jurisdictions.

Recommendation #4: Provide for cross-deputizing St. Louis City and County police officers, to enhance flexibility and effectiveness in fighting crime.

Currently, officers in the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department and the St. Louis County Police Department have authority to make arrests in either jurisdiction, but only for violations of *state law*. City police officers cannot cite or make arrests under County ordinances, and County officers cannot enforce St. Louis City ordinances. This restriction can reduce police effectiveness in combating lower-level crime that would typically be handled at the municipal court level.

Recommendation #5: Reduce the number of dispatch centers in the County to reduce confusion among residents and promote efficiency.

The current emergency dispatch system in St. Louis County is fragmented, inefficient, and at times causes confusion among residents. Right now, there are approximately 20 separate public safety answering points (PSAPs) in St. Louis City and County. Two-thirds of these serve only one community. The number of dispatch centers could be reduced through consolidation or contracting of services.

Recommendation #6: Provide additional resources to support the Peace Officers Standards and Training (POST) program in its monitoring and oversight roles.

Given widespread concerns over police hiring practices in some communities in St. Louis County—the so-called “muni shuffle”—it is essential that the POST program be adequately funded and staffed to carry out its monitoring, oversight, and investigative roles.

Recommendation #7: The Macks Creek law should be strengthened and enforced more vigorously.

While well-intentioned, the Macks Creek law has not been meaningfully enforced on a consistent basis. Six agencies were in violation of the law in 2013; 26 municipalities exceeded 15% of general revenue; and 40 exceeded 10%. As this report was being finalized, the Missouri House and Senate were considering separate bills to strengthen Macks Creek law, including significantly reducing the current 30% cap on court revenue. These efforts are worthy and important, and the bills should be reconciled and enacted into law.

Recommendation #8: Create a Central Data Warehouse about policing in St. Louis City and County that is accessible to police officials and members of the public.

A Central Data Warehouse about policing should be created for St. Louis City and County. The data warehouse would be operated as a joint venture between the governments of the City and County, as the data availability would benefit the region as a whole. Among the data that would be reported and readily available for analysis would be the following:

- Police departments’ operating budgets.
- Organizational information, including staffing levels by rank, gender, and race/ethnicity.
- UCR crime data for Part I and Part II offenses, and UCR arrest data.
- Standardized calls-for-service information, include call type, self-initiated vs. citizen-generated activity, date/time/location, and call disposition.
- Information on all officer-involved shootings. The collection of data on police-involved shootings would give St. Louis City and County a unique opportunity to lead the way nationally on an issue of critical importance at this time.

Recommendation #9: Survey the community on an ongoing basis to measure citizen satisfaction with policing services and to assess progress over time.

We recommend creating a police satisfaction survey that would be available to the public through an online portal. Any citizen who interacts with the police in St. Louis City and County would be able to provide feedback on the services they received and offer suggestions. A number of police agencies nationwide have implemented this type of tool.

Strategic Consolidations of Police Agencies

In an ideal world, consolidating all police agencies would have advantages in terms of ending wasteful duplications of effort, establishing agency-wide standards and best practices, and producing

cost savings. However, the St. Louis region is large and diverse, with different crime problems and priorities, and a number of residents and community leaders we spoke with are satisfied with their police departments and work well with them. Attempting to dismantle current policing structures in these areas would be met with community opposition and undermine productive partnerships that currently exist.

While wholesale mergers of agencies are not recommended, targeted and strategic consolidations could improve the quality of policing in some areas. Therefore, we are recommending that three consolidation clusters be established in St. Louis County.

The communities in each cluster typically have several factors in common: relatively high crime rates, high numbers of low-level arrests and traffic citations, high ratios of officers to resident populations, high numbers of officers per square mile, and high population density. In addition, they are geographically contiguous.

Recommendation #10: Create a consolidation cluster encompassing nine contiguous jurisdictions in the vicinity of University City: Beverly Hills, Hillside, Northwoods, Pagedale, Pine Lawn, Uplands Park, Velda City, Velda Village Hills, and Wellston. These jurisdictions would be consolidated into a single police district and merged via contracts with either the St. Louis County Police Department or the highly regarded University City Police Department.

Recommendation #11: Create a consolidation cluster encompassing four contiguous jurisdictions—Berkeley, Calverton Park, Ferguson and Kinloch—that would be consolidated into a single police district and merged via contract with the St. Louis County Police Department.

Recommendation #12: Merge five contiguous municipalities—Bellefontaine Neighbors, Country Club Hills, Flordell Hills, Moline Acres, and Riverview—via contracts into the Jennings Precinct of the St. Louis County Police Department.

Recommendation #13: Non-cluster agencies should implement the recommendations in this report and consider changes to meet community expectations, the Macks Creek Law, and national best practices in policing.

While we recommend three strategic clusters in Recommendations 10-12, problematic departments in St. Louis County are not limited to the areas that would be affected by those recommendations. Numerous municipal police agencies have serious problems that are not included in the cluster models. One area of particular concern is to the west of Lambert International Airport.

Recommendation #14: Focus on breaking down walls and building bridges between the police and communities in the St. Louis region.

Police, with support from elected officials, must take significant steps to build trust and restore relationships with the communities that they serve. This is especially important in the communities that

historically have had a contentious relationship with the police. Police officials must embrace and commit to this new way of policing as a partnership with the community.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to identify best systems for policing across the entire St. Louis City and St. Louis County area, and we studied the entire region. But inevitably we were drawn to the parts of the region that have the highest rates of serious crime, the highest costs of crime, and the most serious disconnects between high crime rates and police priorities.

Our study revealed a complex policing and justice environment that cannot be “fixed” by any one measure, such as consolidating all of the police agencies in the City and County. Our report recommends targeted and strategic consolidations of three clusters of police departments in St. Louis County, as well as broader, region-wide reforms to improve the quality of policing throughout the City and County.

The challenges ahead are daunting. The region as a whole has significant levels of serious and violent crime, and St. Louis City and a number of municipalities in St. Louis County have very high crime rates. The costs of crime in St. Louis City and County are high—in terms of personal hardship for victims as well as financial costs. It is estimated that crime cost each resident of St. Louis City and County \$1,187 per year in 2013, for a total exceeding \$1.5 billion a year.

The overall response to crime by police is hindered by a number of factors:

- **Fragmentation:** The fragmentation of policing among 60 separate police agencies, many of which are extremely small, causes inefficiencies and uneven delivery of police services to area residents. Small police departments are found in other parts of the United States, and those departments work together in many cases. But the fragmentation in the St. Louis region is extreme. As St. Louis County Police Chief Jon Belmar told us, “It is not realistic for my agency to have close relationships with five dozen different departments.”
- **Weaknesses in policies, training, hiring, and pay levels:** The lack of standards and commonality in policies, training, hiring, and pay levels weakens the professionalism and quality of individual agencies, and undermines public confidence in the police in general.
- **Inappropriate goals:** An inappropriate and misguided mission has been thrust upon the police in many communities: the need to generate large sums of revenue for their city governments. This is not the way that policing is done in the United States. PERF has never before encountered what we have seen in parts of St. Louis County. The role of police is to protect the public and to work with local communities to solve problems of crime and disorder—not to harass residents with absurd systems of fines and penalties, mostly for extremely minor offenses.
- **Racial bias:** Issues of race and racial bias lie at the heart of many of these problems. As revealed in both the statistical data we analyzed and the hundreds of people we spoke with in

Town Hall Meetings, focus groups, and one-on-one interviews, it is predominantly African Americans who are getting caught up in these unfair, improper revenue-driven practices.

These and other issues documented in this report are driving a wedge between police and residents in many communities. They are undermining the legitimacy of the police in the eyes of many residents, community leaders, business leaders, and the news media. And they are preventing the police and residents from working together and cooperatively to prevent crime and respond effectively when residents are victimized by crime.

We also heard that the type of policing being conducted in some parts of the St. Louis region is not what officers want to be doing. Young men and women become police officers because they want to serve their communities and protect them, not because they want to harass the people they are charged with serving. In many communities, good police officers are caught up in a bad system.

Finally, this system is causing severe damage to the reputation of the entire St. Louis region. The failures of the justice system are making it less likely that people nationwide will see the St. Louis area as a healthy, vital, happy place to work and live.

Despite these challenges—and there are many—there is a positive, hopeful way of looking at this situation.

St. Louis City and County have endured a continuing crisis of confidence for almost a year now. As difficult and challenging as this year has been, the crisis provides an opportunity to come together and galvanize the will to make reforms.

People generally understand that the status quo is not an option. Most of the people we encountered during this project were frustrated and concerned, and in some cases, angry. But most were not despairing; they had hope for the future. The leaders of St. Louis City and County should share in their hope and seize this opportunity to fix the problems, and make the region's policing and justice system a national model for reform.

An opportunity exists to create a new, more integrated, regional approach to policing that is modeled on best policies, best practices, and best training and development of officers. Not all of the police agencies in the City and County need to be combined, but there is a great need for police departments to share information, to work together, and to stop functioning as separate agencies unto themselves.

There is also a need and opportunity for private-sector leaders to become more engaged. Business and community leaders have everything at stake in the future of the St. Louis region, so police leaders should think about how they can tap into private-sector assistance, resources, and expertise in such areas as new technologies, human resources, and budgeting.

The future of policing in St. Louis City and County is not just about the police; it is also about the community. Police leaders and community leaders must work together on devising reforms.

Police agencies in St. Louis City and County should aim higher than merely responding to the current crisis. They should aim for developing an unprecedented new state-of-the-art approach to regional policing, in which all agencies work together and work with their communities to address the crime problems and quality of life issues that really matter to the people who live in St. Louis City and St. Louis County.

--End Executive Summary--

Overcoming the Challenges and Creating a Regional Approach to Policing In St. Louis City and County

Introduction

Policing in St. Louis City and County defies easy labels or simple categorizations.

Some communities enjoy strong, community-oriented policing that is characterized by progressive leadership, high standards, open communication and cooperation between officers and residents, and mutual respect. Residents, community leaders, and local officials in these communities are not only satisfied with, but in many cases proud and supportive of their local police departments, and skeptical of any discussion of changing the way things are.

In other communities, however, policing is in crisis.

It is a crisis whose roots began to take hold long before Ferguson Police Officer Darren Wilson's fatal encounter with Michael Brown on West Florissant Avenue in August 2014, although that incident has brought new attention and urgency to the issue of policing practices in the region.

It is a crisis that involves much more than how police officers use force, although police use of force is a major concern in many communities, especially communities of color.

It is a crisis that extends beyond the City of Ferguson. Many of the problems documented in detail in the recent U.S. Department of Justice report on the Ferguson Police Department can be found in other communities as well. In fact, during Town Hall Meetings convened as part of this project, we heard residents and police officials say on a number of occasions that Ferguson was not considered among the worst police departments in the region.

The crisis in many St. Louis County departments is driven by the need to generate more and more revenue to fund the patchwork of dozens of local governments that exist in the county. Especially in small, impoverished municipalities where traditional sources of revenue such as taxes have stagnated or declined, police departments are being pushed into the role of revenue generators for their cities and towns. They are being diverted away from their traditional roles of community guardians and protectors.

This situation is driving a wedge between police and citizens in far too many communities. It is undermining the legitimacy of the police in the eyes of residents, community leaders, and business owners—not just in the communities where policing is in crisis, but in the region as a whole, whose reputation continues to suffer. Ultimately, this dynamic is making communities and their police officers less safe by undermining trust and cooperation between officers and residents. It is a dysfunctional and dangerous situation that cannot be sustained.

Purpose and Methodology

As part of its mission to help organizations in the St. Louis area envision and create a better future, Better Together has long been concerned with the state of public safety and justice. Recently, Better Together conducted a study of the municipal court systems in the St. Louis area, concluding that many municipal courts had lost of the trust of their communities, in particular African-Americans residents and the poor. “In these municipalities, because of a lack of oversight and an overreliance on court fines and fees, the courts are viewed as punitive revenue centers rather than centers of justice,” the report concluded.³

Recognizing the important role that local police agencies play in the court system, Better Together⁴ in the summer of 2014 initiated discussions with the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) to conduct a study of the state of policing in the City and County of St. Louis. The August 9, 2014, fatal shooting of Michael Brown by Ferguson Police Office Darren Wilson, and the large-scale and sometimes violent civil unrest that ensued, gave new urgency to this initiative. In September 2014, Better Together and PERF entered into an agreement to conduct this examination and issue a report with recommendations.

PERF is an independent research organization, based in Washington, DC, that focuses on critical issues in policing. Since its founding in 1976, PERF has identified best policies and practices on fundamental issues, such as strategies to minimize police use of force; developing community policing and increasing public perceptions of legitimacy and procedural justice in policing; new technologies for improving police accountability, such as body-worn cameras; and civil rights and racial issues in policing.⁵ In addition to developing best practices, PERF has conducted hundreds of reviews of individual police agencies, on issues such as resource allocation, productivity analysis, training practices, strategic planning, and organizational “climate.”⁶

The purpose of the study is two-fold:

³ “Municipal Courts Report, Executive Summary.” Better Together, p. 1.
<http://www.bettertogetherstl.com/studies/public-safety/municipal-courts-report>

⁴ Better Together describes itself as “a grassroots project born in response to growing public interest in the fragmented nature of local government throughout St. Louis City and County, which dates back to 1876, when St. Louis City broke away from St. Louis County.” It is sponsored by the Missouri Council for a Better Economy.
<http://www.bettertogetherstl.com/about>

⁵ See www.policeforum.org. Many of PERF’s reports on these issues are available online at <http://www.policeforum.org/free-online-documents>.

⁶ See <http://www.policeforum.org/management-services>

1. To examine how policing services are currently being delivered in St. Louis County/City, assess the state of police-community relations, and compare the status quo with best practices in the policing profession.
2. To provide recommendations for moving forward, including identifying policing models and operational options to improve policing in the region.

Research Activities

For this study, PERF carried out a variety of research activities:

- **Town Hall Meetings:** Better Together sponsored a series of Town Hall Meetings in various parts of region, including St. Louis City, Bridgeton, Des Peres, University City, unincorporated North County, and unincorporated South County. We heard from hundreds of residents, community leaders, elected representatives, and others who participated in these town halls.
- **Focus groups:** We convened targeted focus group meetings, to probe in greater detail the perspectives of different sectors of the community, including municipal government representatives, community leaders, police officials, school administrators, youths, and others. These focus groups included individuals and groups who often feel underrepresented and disenfranchised.
- **Interviews:** We held individual meetings with key stakeholders, including community leaders, elected representatives, law enforcement officers and executives, police union leaders, legal experts, members of the clergy, news media, and others.
- **Data collection and analysis:** We conducted a wide-ranging data collection and analysis effort that examined population and demographic trends; police department organization, staffing, and costs; and reported crimes and calls for service, where available (see below).
- **Literature review:** We completed an extensive review of prior research, including studies of the municipal courts, the U.S. Department of Justice Investigation of the Ferguson Police Department, other research reports, Missouri State statutes and regulations, and articles by the St. Louis and national news media.

Data Challenges

Obtaining data on policing in St. Louis City and County proved to be a significant, and at times difficult, undertaking. In November 2014, Better Together sent a request under the Missouri Sunshine Law for public records from 58 municipal police departments. There was a wide variance in how departments responded to this Sunshine Request. Some agencies provided materials within two weeks and free of charge; other agencies took months to reply or charged for material that other agencies provided without charge. Additionally, agencies that replied did not necessarily provide all the information

requested. The total cost to simply collect these records has approached \$17,000. As noted in Better Together's March 2015 Transparency Report:⁷

On average, it would cost a citizen in the St. Louis region \$113.64 [as of March 2015] to obtain basic information on how his or her tax dollars are being utilized at a municipal level.... The cost and time required for this information is prohibitive to an average citizen. This is contrary to the principle of open and transparent government.

Our attempts to collect additional information, as well as to leverage the data collected through Better Together's Sunshine Request, highlighted numerous challenges:

- **Given that each municipality maintains individual records, the sheer count of data sources to contact is prohibitive.** In St. Louis City and County, it is possible that a citizen or researcher would have to seek data across a large number of municipalities, even if the citizen is interested in only a few square miles of local geography. The high number and small size of municipalities contribute to the highly fragmented data, which makes analysis of the region a considerable challenge.
- **PERF encountered challenges in obtaining calls-for-service (CFS) data from multiple computer-aided dispatch (CAD) centers.** Calls-for-service data is an essential element of analyzing a police department, because it provides strong evidence of how officers spend their time. CFS data not only describes the nature of each call, but also how much time it took the officer to handle each incident. For example, CFS data may show that officers are overwhelmed by high levels of crime, and spend almost all their workday running from one call to the next, taking reports from crime victims. In another police department, or perhaps in a different precinct of the same department, officers may have fewer calls per hour, and thus may have more free time to engage in proactive community policing initiatives, such as meeting with residents to discuss local crime and quality-of-life issues and devise longer-term solutions. CFS data also can differentiate calls that officers respond to (such as 911 calls) from self-initiated activities (such as traffic stops). Thus, CFS data can help identify agencies in which officers spend large portions of their time on traffic enforcement, rather than crime prevention and community policing.

Well-run police departments use a Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system that captures all call-for-service information, where input of data is handled by a call-taker or dispatcher. Follow-up information on calls can be added by the dispatcher or the officers themselves from their mobile data terminals. CAD systems almost always include capabilities for designing and running reports about CFS data.

For this study, PERF made a request to police agencies and dispatch centers for CFS data. The St. Louis Metropolitan and St. Louis County Police Departments and a number of

⁷ "Transparency Report, Executive Summary" Better Together, March 2015, http://www.bettertogetherstl.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Transparency_ExecutiveSummary.pdf.

other departments, which together cover 62% of the area's population, provided the information promptly. However, the majority of municipalities and dispatch centers did not respond to our request. Our inability to secure more comprehensive CFS data limited our ability to analyze workloads.

- **The lack of records standardization across departments meant that it is difficult and time-consuming to obtain even the most basic information about police departments, such as budget figures, salary scales, and even the number of officers who are employed by an agency.**
- The contracting of policing services throughout the region further complicated data collection and analysis. While contracting can provide benefits of efficiency and standardization, it can add another layer of bureaucracy in terms of data. For instance, crime data came from the Missouri Department of Public Safety and covered all independent departments in St. Louis City and County. However, data on municipalities that contract with the St. Louis County Police Department were missing, since the County lumps all of the data for those municipalities into its official "Unincorporated" category. This required an additional request to the County Police for the municipal-specific data. To its credit, the Department provided the requested data.

PERF raises these issues of data collection not because they posed challenges for our study, but because they undermine the transparency of policing in St. Louis County. With a significant effort, PERF was able to mobilize resources to obtain as much information as the police agencies in St. Louis County were willing to provide. **But the more important point is that this data should be easily available – for example, in reports that are available online – to residents and community leaders who want to know how their police officers spend their time, and whether the priorities of the community are reflected in the activities of their local police.**

One of PERF's recommendations in this report specifically addresses the issue of data collection and transparency.

Overview of Policing in St. Louis City and County

St. Louis City and County combined are home to just over 1.3 million residents, according to the latest U.S. Census population estimates. Approximately 319,000 people live in the City of St. Louis, whose population has declined by 63% from a peak of 857,000 in 1950. St. Louis County, by contrast, has seen its population increase by 146% since 1950, topping just over a million people in the latest Census estimates. These residents live in 90 different municipalities, plus unincorporated areas of the County.

As residents left the city in large numbers in the 1950s and 1960s, a variety of municipalities sprang up in the County. Geographically, these municipalities range in size from less than one-tenth of a square mile (Beverly Hills, Glen Echo Park, and Vinita Terrace, for example) to 25 or more square miles (Chesterfield and Wildwood). Forty-three of the County's municipalities, or just under half, occupy less than one square mile.

In terms of population, these municipalities range in size from *a few dozen* residents to more than 52,000 (Florissant). Many of the municipalities that sprung up in St. Louis County are not much larger than traditional neighborhoods. Indeed, some municipalities started out as private subdivisions, then incorporated as municipalities in an attempt to restrict who could move in. A half-century ago, the people moving into suburban St. Louis did not necessarily envision the current geography of shoulder-to-shoulder municipalities, but they did want to control land development within their communities. Today, those residents have inherited a collection of extremely small, tightly compacted municipalities that rest one on top of the other. **Of the 90 municipalities in St. Louis County, 23 have fewer than 1,000 residents; 48 have fewer than 5,000 people.**

The municipalities of St. Louis County are generally divided into four regions: North County, Mid County, South County, and West County. The Mid and North County regions contain the largest number of small communities, as well as some of the oldest "inner ring" suburbs that sprouted up from the migration from St. Louis City. Today, many of these communities are confronted with the same problems of poverty, crime, unemployment, substandard housing, and poor student achievement that residents were fleeing when they left the City of St. Louis decades ago.

In addition, much of the region remains segregated racially, economically, and politically. Many of the inner ring suburbs began as all-white communities that excluded African-Americans, first through racially restrictive covenants in property deeds, and then, after those were struck down by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1948, by zoning laws and racial "steering" by real estate agents toward certain neighborhoods and away from others. Today, many of those municipalities have become all-black or nearly all-black. Ferguson, for example, was 25% African-American in 1990, but is 67% African-American today. Similarly, the city of Jennings is now nearly 90% African-American. At the same time, many white

residents moved farther away from the city and the inner ring of suburbs. So did many of the jobs and other economic engines propelling the County’s growth.

As the Economic Policy Institute concluded, these patterns of racial segregation and economic segregation go hand-in-hand. “The lower incomes of African-Americans today cannot be understood in isolation from the history of pervasive housing segregation. By keeping black families out of the better-off suburbs, segregation not only deprived them of the opportunity to build wealth through rising home equity, but contributed to (and was reinforced by) what some urban scholars term the ‘spatial mismatch’ between the neighborhoods where African-Americans mostly lived, and the better suburban jobs they had difficulty accessing.”⁸

Community leaders and residents we spoke with pointed out that St. Louis City and County were polarized racially and economically long before the Michael Brown shooting, but that the divisions may be even worse today. This feeling was summed up by a participant at PERF’s January 7, 2015, Town Hall Meeting at the Sheet Metal Workers Hall in St. Louis City: “Our neighborhoods have always been filled with crime. Now, sleeping giants have been awakened. Our anger is at 1000 percent. It’s directed at our law enforcement and political leaders for years of police harassment and being economically disadvantaged. Things are different in other areas. Nothing will get better if we don’t work together.”

Policing in the Region Reflects Geographic Patterns

The same racial, economic, and demographic patterns that helped to shape the overall geography of St. Louis City and County have greatly influenced the organization of policing as well. Today, there are 60 individual police departments of varying sizes, structures, and resource levels.⁹ In addition, 32 municipalities in the County contract for police services: 18 with the St. Louis County Police Department, and 14 with neighboring municipalities.

Table 1: Data on St. Louis County Police Agencies and St. Louis City Metropolitan Police Dept.

POLICE DEPARTMENT	MUNICIPALITIES PATROLLED	POLICE DEPARTMENT SQUARE MILEAGE	NUMBER OF FULL TIME OFFICERS	Avg Pt I Violent Crime per 1000	Avg Pt I Arrests per 1000	Avg "Other" Arrests per 1000	Police per Sq Mile	Police Per 1000 residents
BALLWIN PD	Ballwin	8.99	47	0.5	2.5	8.8	5.2	1.5
BELLA VILLA PD	Bella Villa	0.13	5	2.7	2.2	6.0	38.5	6.9

⁸ “The Making of Ferguson: Public Policies at the Root of its Troubles,” by Richard Rothstein. Economic Policy Institute, October 15, 2014. This report offers a detailed look at historical policies and trends that contributed to the current municipal geography of St. Louis County. <http://www.epi.org/publication/making-ferguson/>

⁹ Table 1 does not include the Pacific Police Department, which represents the 60th department in the county. While a small portion of the City of Pacific is in St. Louis County, the vast majority is within Franklin County.

POLICE DEPARTMENT	MUNICIPALITIES PATROLLED	POLICE DEPARTMENT SQUARE MILEAGE	NUMBER OF FULL TIME OFFICERS	Avg Pt I Violent Crime per 1000	Avg Pt I Arrests per 1000	Avg "Other" Arrests per 1000	Police per Sq Mile	Police Per 1000 residents
BELLEFONTAINE PD	Bellefontaine	4.32	31	4.9	7.2	65.6	7.2	2.9
BEL-NOR PD	Bel-Nor	0.63	5	1.7	5.1	14.1	7.9	3.3
BEL-RIDGE PD	Bel-Ridge	0.8	14	15.1	10.2	168.1	17.5	5.1
BERKELEY PD	Berkeley	4.97	31	17.5	11.0	55.4	6.2	3.5
BEVERLY HILLS PD	Beverly Hills, Velda Village Hills	0.21*	Information Not Provided	17.0	18.8	1087.8	N/A	N/A
BRECKENRIDGE HILLS PD	Breckenridge Hills	0.8	Information Not Provided	4.4	8.1	83.1	N/A	N/A
BRENTWOOD PD	Brentwood	1.96	27	1.4	20.7	28.5	13.8	3.4
BRIDGETON PD	Bridgeton	14.6	50	6.6	48.9	46.7	3.4	4.3
CALVERTON PARK PD	Calverton Park	0.41	6	2.6	3.9	191.8	14.6	4.6
CHARLACK PD	Charlack	0.26	8	3.7	12.3	156.9	30.8	5.9
CHESTERFIELD PD	Chesterfield	31.78	90	0.7	7.3	8.9	2.8	1.9
CLAYTON PD	Clayton	2.48	44	1.0	4.2	40.9	17.7	2.8
COUNTRY CLUB HILLS PD	Country Club Hills	0.18	Information Not Provided	5.8	14.9	151.3	N/A	N/A
CRESTWOOD PD	Crestwood	3.6	28	0.7	8.6	14.8	7.8	2.4
CREVE COEUR PD	Creve Coeur	10.27	44	0.8	6.5	17.4	4.3	2.5
DES PERES PD	Des Peres	4.32	30	0.9	41.0	28.0	6.9	3.6
EDMUNDSON PD	Edmundson	0.26	11	5.8	18.0	242.0	42.3	13.2
ELLISVILLE PD	Ellisville	4.4	22	0.9	5.3	12.3	5.0	2.4
EUREKA PD	Eureka	10.35	21	1.1	7.5	16.6	2.0	2.1
FERGUSON PD	Ferguson	6.19	55	4.7	17.6	16.7	8.9	2.6
FLORDELL HILLS PD	Flordell Hills	0.11	5	8.5	8.8	103.9	45.5	6.1
FLORISSANT PD	Florissant	12.56	88	1.7	11.3	26.2	7.0	1.7
FRONTENAC PD	Frontenac, Crystal Lake Park, Huntleigh, Westwood	4.6	21	0.9	5.9	40.6	4.6	4.6
GLENDALE PD	Glendale	1.92	11	0.3	2.5	4.9	5.7	1.9

POLICE DEPARTMENT	MUNICIPALITIES PATROLLED	POLICE DEPARTMENT SQUARE MILEAGE	NUMBER OF FULL TIME OFFICERS	Avg Pt I Violent Crime per 1000	Avg Pt I Arrests per 1000	Avg "Other" Arrests per 1000	Police per Sq Mile	Police Per 1000 residents
HAZELWOOD PD	Hazelwood	16.02	69	3.3	15.5	52.8	4.3	2.7
HILLSDALE PD	Hillsdale	0.35	Information Not Provided	18.4	11.8	245.5	N/A	N/A
KINLOCH PD	Kinloch	0.73	Information Not Provided	28.9	15.4	77.2	N/A	N/A
KIRKWOOD PD	Kirkwood, Oakland	9.77	61	1.1	12.3	4.1	6.2	2.1
LADUE PD	Ladue	8.55	28	0.8	5.5	23.8	3.3	3.3
LAKESHIRE PD	Lakeshire	2.28	Information Not Provided	1.4	2.9	8.4	N/A	N/A
MANCHESTER PD	Manchester	5.08	37	0.3	10.2	4.3	7.3	2.0
MAPLEWOOD PD	Maplewood	1.56	32	3.8	51.3	119.1	20.5	4.0
MARYLAND HEIGHTS PD	Maryland Heights, Champ	22.64	73	1.8	8.1	71.3	3.2	2.7
MOLINE ACRES PD	Moline Acres	0.57	12	7.9	22.4	251.1	21.1	4.9
NORMANDY PD	Normandy, Bellerive, Cool Valley, Glen Echo Park, Greendale, Pasadena Park	2.99	31	3.7	4.9	54.3	10.4	4.0
NORTHWOODS PD	Northwoods	0.71	21	8.8	15.1	7.9	29.6	5.0
OLIVETTE PD	Olivette	2.78	22	1.8	4.6	18.9	7.9	2.8
OVERLAND PD	Overland	4.36	45	3.1	14.5	54.7	10.3	2.8
PAGEDALE PD	Pagedale	1.19	17	8.5	13.9	287.2	14.3	5.1
PINE LAWN PD	Pine Lawn	0.61	11	13.6	12.2	463.3	18.0	3.4
RICHMOND HEIGHTS PD	Richmond Heights	2.03	38	2.5	55.4	63.6	18.7	4.4
RIVERVIEW PD	Riverview	0.83	12	10.3	8.6	11.2	14.5	4.2
ROCK HILL PD	Rock Hill	1.09	10	1.4	2.8	29.6	9.2	2.2
SAINT ANN PD	Saint Ann	3.18	Information Not Provided	5.3	19.2	89.4	N/A	N/A
SAINT JOHN PD	Saint John, Sycamore Hills	1.56	21	3.9	20.2	126.9	13.5	2.9

POLICE DEPARTMENT	MUNICIPALITIES PATROLLED	POLICE DEPARTMENT SQUARE MILEAGE	NUMBER OF FULL TIME OFFICERS	Avg Pt I Violent Crime per 1000	Avg Pt I Arrests per 1000	Avg "Other" Arrests per 1000	Police per Sq Mile	Police Per 1000 residents
SHREWSBURY PD	Shrewsbury, Mackenzie	1.45	18	0.6	3.9	17.2	12.4	2.8
ST. LOUIS COUNTY PD	St. Louis County, Black Jack, Clarkson Valley, Dellwood, Fenton, Grantwood Village, Green Park, Hanley Hills, Jennings, Marlborough, Norwood Court, Pasadena Hills, Twin Oaks, Uplands Park, Valley Park, Vinita Terrace, Wilbur Park, Wildwood, Winchester	265	843	2.6	9.3	21.1	3.2	2.0
ST. LOUIS METROPOLITAN PD	Saint Louis City	61.91	1,239	17.7	17.1	19.8	20.0	3.9
SUNSET HILLS PD	Sunset Hills	9.1	26	1.4	6.1	29.9	2.9	3.1
TOWN AND COUNTRY PD	Town and Country, Country Life Acres	11.8	29	0.5	4.2	26.5	2.5	2.7
UNIVERSITY CITY PD	University City	5.9	66	5.5	10.8	5.6	11.2	1.9
VELDA CITY PD	Velda City	0.16	7	12.4	9.4	177.2	43.8	4.9
VINITA PARK PD	Vinita Park	0.71	Information Not Provided	4.3	4.7	62.2	N/A	N/A
WARSON WOODS PD	Warson Woods	0.6	6	0.5	3.6	10.2	10.0	3.1
WEBSTER GROVES PD	Webster Groves	5.9	46	1.2	2.4	15.3	7.8	2.0
WELLSTON PD	Wellston	0.93	Information Not Provided	39.8	39.3	272.4	N/A	N/A
WOODSON TERRACE PD	Woodson Terrace	0.77	17	3.2	8.6	22.7	22.1	4.2

** This square mileage combines Beverley Hills and their contract municipality, but crime, arrest, and policing calculations are based on Beverley Hill's square miles of 0.09 since we have separate crime and arrest data for Beverley Hills*

Note: The crime and arrest rates per 1,000 residents represent five-year averages from 2010-2014.

The largest department in the region is the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department, a full-service agency with more than 1,200 sworn officers serving approximately 319,000 residents of the City of St. Louis. Founded in 1808, the department has been accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) since 2007. (CALEA accreditation is a voluntary process by which a police agency demonstrates that it has adopted policies on a wide range of practices in policing. The process of obtaining accreditation requires significant time and effort, and is considered an indication of a degree of professionalism in a police department.)

The St. Louis County Police Department is the second largest department, with almost 850 sworn officers. County police provide policing services in the unincorporated areas of St. Louis County and to 18 municipalities that contract with the County Police Department to provide police services. The St. Louis County Police Department also provides various other services—dispatch, jail and lockup, investigative and forensic support, and SWAT/special operations, among others—to a number of municipal police departments in the County. The St. Louis County Police Department has been accredited by CALEA since 1998.

Beyond these two large, full-service agencies, St. Louis County has 58 municipal police departments. These range in size from very small, five-officer departments (in Bella Vista, Bel-Nor, and the recently created Flordell Hills Police Department) to the Chesterfield and Florissant Police Departments, which have approximately 90 officers each. At least 17 of the municipal police departments in the County have fewer than 20 officers, and at least seven have fewer than 10 officers.¹⁰ While all of these departments provide basic patrol services, many of them rely on other agencies, such as the St. Louis County Police Department, for support with dispatch, lockup, investigations, and crime scene processing.

Two of the larger jurisdictions that have contracted with the St. Louis County Police Department are Fenton, which began its contract in 1995, and Jennings, which started in 2011. Despite some initial resistance from elected leaders, the business community, and some residents, the consensus in both communities seems to be that contracting with the County has improved police services and helped to control costs. Recently, Jennings and some nearby unincorporated areas of the County were organized into a distinct Jennings Precinct within the County Police Department.

One other approach employed in the County is a regional model, centered around the city of Normandy in North County. In addition to serving the approximately 5,000 residents of its city, the Normandy

¹⁰ Nine police departments in the region did not supply data on the number of officers they employ.

Police Department provides police services under contract with the nearby villages of Pasadena Park, Glen Echo Park, and Bellerive Acres as well as the cities of Cool Valley and Greendale.

A closer look at police staffing

Table 1 provides information about the number of officers in the region and their staffing levels. One common measure of police staffing is the number of officers per residents. Nationally, the average is 2-2.25 officers per 1,000 residents. In cities or areas with high crime levels, the average can be closer to 4-5 officers per 1,000 residents.

Looking at St. Louis City and County as a whole, the numbers are generally consistent with the national averages. The combined St. Louis region (St. Louis Metropolitan Police, St. Louis County Police, and all municipal police departments in St. Louis County) has 2.8 officers per 1,000 residents. The City has 3.9 officers, the County overall (including municipal departments within the County) has 2.3, and the area served by the County Police Department has 2.0 officers per 1,000 residents.

However, the number of officers per residents varies widely among municipal police departments.

Approximately one-third of the departments in St. Louis County that reported information have 4 or more officers per 1,000 residents—in other words, a higher rate than in the City of St. Louis.

These municipalities include Edmundson (which, at 13.2, is *nearly five times the regional average*), Bella Villa (6.9), Normandy (6.2), Flordell Hills (6.1), and Frontenac (6.0).

On the other hand, five municipalities have fewer than 2 officers per 1,000 residents.

Another way to examine police staffing, also found in Table 1, is the number of officers per reported crimes and reported arrests. For the latter, we examined the number of arrests for “Index” (or “Part I”) crimes¹¹ and for “other” offenses. The “other” category generally includes offenses that are so minor they are not included in any other UCR categories such as violent felonies, misdemeanors, traffic offenses, or drug offenses. Nationally in 2013, there were 9.8 million Part I offenses reported to police, more than 2 million Part I arrests, and 3.2 million arrests for “other” offenses. With a U.S. population of 316 million, the national levels were 31.0 Part I crimes per 1,000 residents, 6.4 Part I arrests per 1,000 residents, and 10.4 “other” arrests for less serious offenses per 1,000 residents.

¹¹ The Part I offenses that make up the FBI’s Uniform Crime Report (UCR) “Crime Index” are murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny/theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson. We have excluded arson from this analysis because counts are typically low and less reliable than other Index crimes.

Disproportionate arrest rates for minor offenses

Looking at the numbers for St. Louis City and County reveals some interesting facts. Of particular note is the high number of arrests per resident for “other” offenses in many communities, both compared with national averages and compared with the Part I arrest activity in the same jurisdictions.

For example, on average between 2010 and 2014, the Beverly Hills Police Department made 1,087 “other” arrests per 1,000 residents, or the equivalent of more than one such arrest each year for every resident of the municipalities it patrols.¹² This is more than 100 times the national rate of arrests for “other” offenses.

If one compares the arrest rates for “other” (less serious) offenses directly to the arrest rates for Part I (more serious) crimes, a pattern emerges. In many other departments, including Edmundson, Moline Acres, Pine Lawn, Calverton Park, and Pagedale, the arrest rate for “other” offenses is more than 10 times higher than the arrest rate for more serious crimes. Nationally, the arrest rate for less serious offenses is not even twice the arrest rate for more serious crimes. (In the City of St. Louis, which has higher levels of serious crime, the arrest rates for the serious Part I offenses and the less serious offenses are almost identical.)

The dramatic difference in arrest rates in so many municipalities in St. Louis County suggests that some agencies are devoting disproportionate attention and resources to less serious crime issues. This seems to be occurring even in communities that have problems with more serious crime, as measured by the number of Part I crimes per 1,000 residents that are reported to police.

Lack of Diversity in the Police Ranks

Another organizational issue that came up frequently during our Town Hall Meetings and focus groups was the level of diversity among police officers in many jurisdictions. Time and again, we heard from residents—in particular, African-American residents—who expressed concern that their police departments did not come close to reflecting the racial makeup of the communities they serve. On numerous occasions, residents expressed frustration that officers do not understand the community, because they do not live there and cannot relate to the cultures, experiences, and everyday challenges of the people who do live there. During a Town Hall Meeting on January 8, 2015, one participant said, “I attended community meetings in Ferguson with members of the community and police officers. The

¹² Obviously, some of these arrests are of individuals who live outside of the municipalities that the Beverly Hills Police Department patrols. Still, measuring arrests per resident population provides a consistent measure of law enforcement activity in various communities.

Ferguson police officers just don't understand that there are issues of systematic racism present. They don't get it."

During a focus group conducted at Carnahan High School of the Future in St. Louis City, one participant stated: "The city of St. Louis has a residency requirement for all police officers. I think this helps cops understand the unique neighborhood cultures in the city. Most county municipalities don't have a residency requirement and the officers aren't well received, especially in North County." A participant in a different focus group put it more bluntly: "I question whether the County municipalities are actually serious about hiring minorities."

Challenges to building a diverse workforce: While residents expressed a desire for more diversity within their police forces, police executives in meetings with PERF identified a number of barriers to increasing diversity, including mixed feelings among African-Americans and other minorities about the policing profession, and fierce competition for qualified minority candidates. Such candidates are in high demand and can often choose among multiple offers from departments that have the most attractive compensation packages, newer equipment, and better technology. As one police official stated, "Diversity won't happen at the community level [in local municipalities] for generations." We heard similar sentiments in meetings with leaders of African-American communities, who said that no matter what your background, at some point almost every African-American in the St. Louis region will have had a negative, even humiliating experience with the police. These negative feelings make some members of the African-American community even less inclined to pursue careers in law enforcement. This is an issue that has been reported by police chiefs in other parts of the United States.

Other speakers at the Town Hall Meetings sponsored by Better Together and focus groups pointed out that racial diversity within officer ranks does not guarantee community trust or high-quality policing, especially if African-American and other minority officers are hired into departments that continue to emphasize revenue generation over community policing.

Findings

This section presents the major findings of our study. These findings are based on the data analysis of crime and policing, as well as the personal perspectives and experiences offered by the participants in our Town Hall, focus group, and one-on-one meetings.

Finding #1:

The City of St. Louis and many municipalities in St. Louis County are experiencing high rates of violent and property crime.

Our analysis of crime in St. Louis City and County was based on the FBI's Uniform Crime Report for 2013 (the most recent year for which complete data were available),¹³ as well as 2014 data obtained from the Missouri Department of Public Safety.

Looking broadly, crime rates in St. Louis City and County combined exceeded both the national and Midwest rates for all seven Index crimes analyzed in 2013 (see Table 2). However, this big-picture overview masks important facts about crime levels within the combined jurisdictions. For example, St. Louis County had substantially lower crime rates than the region as a whole. Crime rates in the County were similar to other metropolitan counties in the United States (although St. Louis County had noticeably higher robbery and larceny rates).

Not surprisingly, crime is highly concentrated within St. Louis City, which also has some of the highest concentrations of poverty, unemployment, drug addiction, and other social factors that contribute to crime. Though the City has approximately one-third the population of the County, raw crime counts are generally much higher in the City. For example, St. Louis City reported 2,209 robberies in 2013; St. Louis County, 751. As a result, the crime rate per 100,000 population is considerably higher in the City; in fact, the 2013 crime rates in St. Louis City exceeded almost all of the comparison areas we examined. The City's murder rate is 10 times that of the County, and substantially higher than the rate of similarly-sized cities (250,000-499,999) nationally.

¹³ We caution that UCR data provide a general overview of crime and should not be used for ranking or rating purposes. As the FBI notes in its data disclaimer: "UCR data are sometimes used to compile rankings of individual jurisdictions and institutions of higher learning. These incomplete analyses have often created misleading perceptions which adversely affect geographic entities and their residents. For this reason, the FBI has a long-standing policy against ranking participating law enforcement agencies on the basis of crime data alone.... UCR statistics include only jurisdictional population figures along with reported crime, clearance, or arrest data. Rankings ignore the uniqueness of each locale."

Table 2. UCR offense figures and crime rates (per 100,000 population), 2013

AREA		Murder	Rape*	Robbery	Aggravated Assault	Burglary	Larceny	Motor Vehicle Theft
U.S.								
	Count	14,196	108,612	345,031	724,149	1,928,465	6,004,453	699,594
	Rate	4.5	34.4	109.1	229.1	610.0	1,899.4	221.3
Midwest								
	Count	3,042	26,929	66,945	135,803	383,297	1,217,580	128,619
	Rate	4.5	39.9	99.1	201.0	567.4	1,802.5	190.4
Cities								
	Count	10,346	37,637	290,331	528,554	1,311,054	4,522,141	535,070
	Rate	5.2	44.0	145.7	265.3	658.1	2,270.0	268.6
Metropolitan Counties								
	Count	2,337	10,858	36,566	121,120	357,567	864,293	108,473
	Rate	3.4	31.7	53.0	175.7	518.6	1,253.4	157.3
Cities, population 250,000 to 499,999								
	Count	1,640	4,223	42,962	58,600	139,194	391,524	73,731
	Rate	11.0	62.3	288.8	393.9	935.5	2,631.5	495.6
STL Region (County and City)								
	Count	157	568	2,209	4,969	9,307	31,798	4,721
	Rate	11.9	43.0	167.4	376.5	705.1	2,409.0	357.7
STL County								
	Count	37	235	751	1,798	5,002	18,263	1,391
	Rate	3.7	23.5	75.0	179.5	499.5	1,823.7	138.9
STL City								
	Count	120	333	1,458	3,171	4,305	13,535	3,330
	Rate	37.7	104.6	457.8	995.6	1,351.7	4,249.7	1,045.5

Source: Missouri Department of Public Safety; Crime in the United States, 2013

Note: Considerable caution is required regarding rape statistics, because the FBI recently adopted a significantly broader definition of rape, and not all police agencies are reporting under the new definition.

Although the City of St. Louis has comparatively high levels of violent and property crime, it is not unique in this regard—parts of St. Louis County are experiencing high crime levels as well. In 2014, there were 16.9 violent crimes and 63 property crimes per 1,000 residents of St. Louis City.¹⁴ There are several municipalities within St. Louis County that have crime rates similar to, or in some cases higher than, St. Louis City's rates.

¹⁴ Because this part of the analysis looked at jurisdictions with smaller population sizes, crime rates were calculated per 1,000 residents, as opposed to the traditional measure of 100,000.

Table 3. Violent and property crime rates, 2014

AREA	Violent Crime Rate (per 1,000 residents)
STL City-County Combined	6.3
STL City	16.9
STL County	3.0
TOP 10 MUNICIPALITIES	
Wellston	35.9
Velda City	15.5
Bellefontaine Neighbors	14.2
Kinloch	13.4
Jennings	13.1
Hillsdale	12.9
Bel-Ridge	12.1
Northwoods	10.6
Flordell Hills	9.7
Pine Lawn	9.5

AREA	Property Crime Rate (per 1,000 residents)
STL City-County Combined	31.9
STL City	63.0
STL County	22.0
TOP 10 MUNICIPALITIES	
Bellefontaine Neighbors	176.5
Fenton	99.0
Wellston	97.7
Richmond Heights	88.3
Bridgeton	80.8
Jennings	79.3
Riverview	73.5
Cool Valley	65.2
Pine Lawn	54.0
Berkeley	53.8

For example, the city of Wellston had a violent crime rate—35.9 per 1,000 residents—more than double that of St. Louis City, and in other municipalities the violent crime rate is just slightly below the City’s rate. In addition, eight municipalities have property crime rates greater than St. Louis City: Bellefontaine Neighbors (nearly three times the City’s rate), Fenton, Wellston, Richmond Heights, Bridgeton, Jennings, Riverview, and Cool Valley.

Much of this crime is concentrated in the North and Mid County. For violent crime, the “Top 10” most violent municipalities in St. Louis County account for 2.3% of the County’s area (11.6 square miles of the entire County’s 508 square miles) and 3.4% of the County’s total population (34,052 residents of the County’s total population of 1,001,876). However, these same municipalities account for 15.4% of the County’s total violent crime in 2014. Four municipalities—Bellefontaine Neighbors, Jennings, Pine Lawn, and Wellston—were on the “top 10” listings for both violent and property crime, and all four are located in North or Mid County.

Figure 1. Municipalities with the highest violent crime rates in St. Louis County, 2014

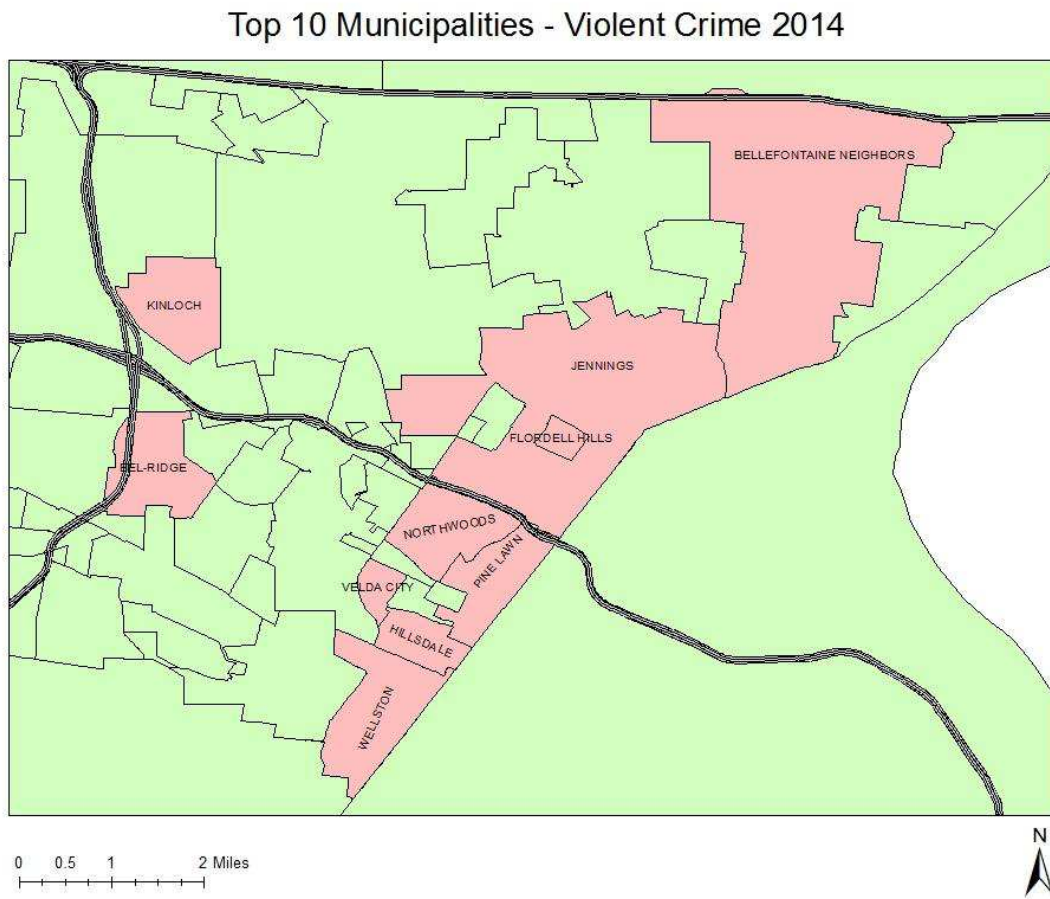
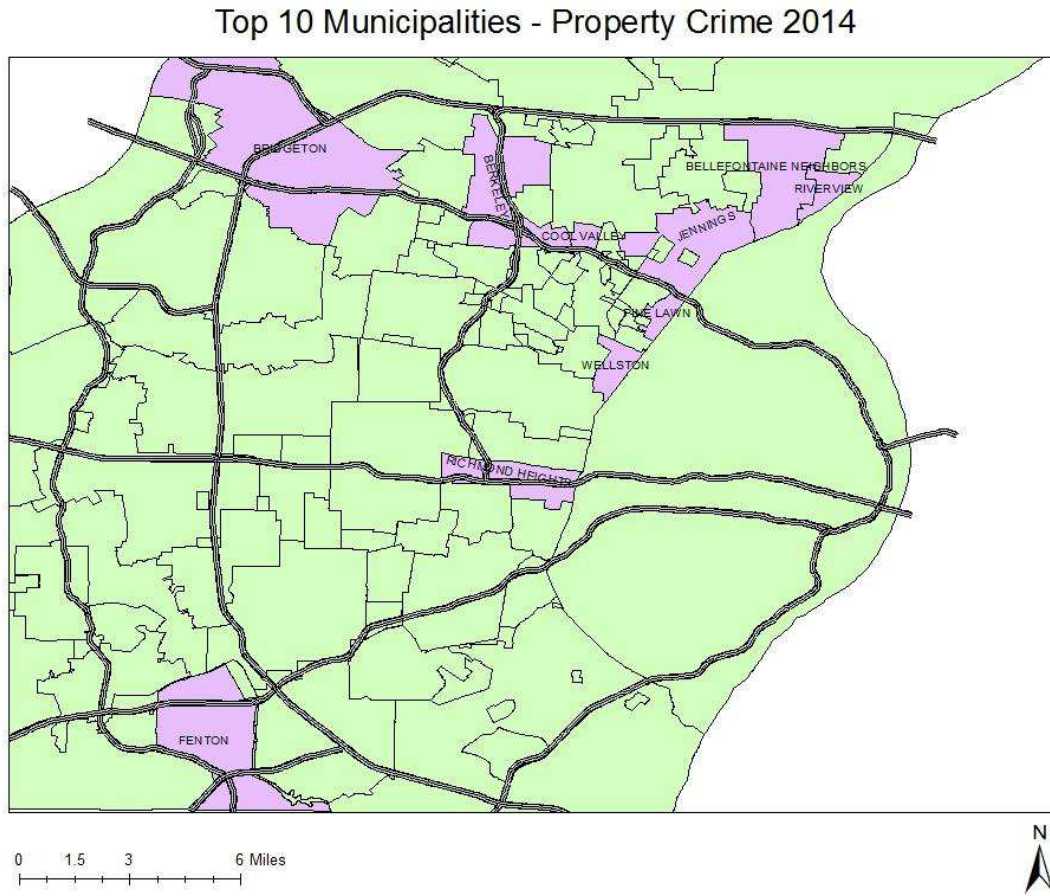


Figure 2. Municipalities with the highest property crime rates in St. Louis County, 2014



These data illustrate that crime does not stop at a municipal or county border, and the impact of crime affects the entire region. St. Louis City and County should view policing as a regional issue that is best addressed through regional approaches and strategies.

Finding #2:

Crime has financial costs that are borne by the residents and governments of the St. Louis region.

Measuring the cost of crime is important for at least two reasons: to understand how crime affects economic vitality and to assess the returns on investments made in policing and other criminal justice activities. To help policymakers and researchers better understand and measure the actual costs of crime and the returns on investments, the RAND Corp. developed a research-based *Cost of Crime*

Calculator.¹⁵ The calculator is based on a RAND report that summarizes research studies about the costs of crime. PERF used the most “conservative” of three cost models cited by RAND (the model that yields the lowest dollar figures for the costs of each type of crime).¹⁶ These cost estimates include:

- Potential victim costs, such as lost productivity and property, additional medical and/or social/psychological care, and a future “quality of life” estimate, when applicable.
- Criminal justice costs, such as the necessary processing outlays from police, legal representatives, courts, corrections, and probation/parole.
- Offender costs, such as expenses borne by offenders’ families and the loss of legitimate earnings due to incarceration.

Table 4. Estimated cost per crime nationally cited by RAND Corp.

Type of Crime	Cost Estimate (in 2014 dollars)
Homicide	\$5,708,829
Rape	\$171,265
Robbery*	\$26,261
Aggravated Assault	\$62,797
Burglary	\$5,709
Larceny	\$3,197
Motor Vehicle Theft	\$10,276

SOURCE: RAND Corporation

Using UCR data from 2013 and the *Cost of Crime Calculator*, we determined the annual costs of FBI Index crime across multiple jurisdictions in St. Louis County and City.

In St. Louis City and County combined, the total cost of serious crime exceeded \$1.56 billion in 2013.

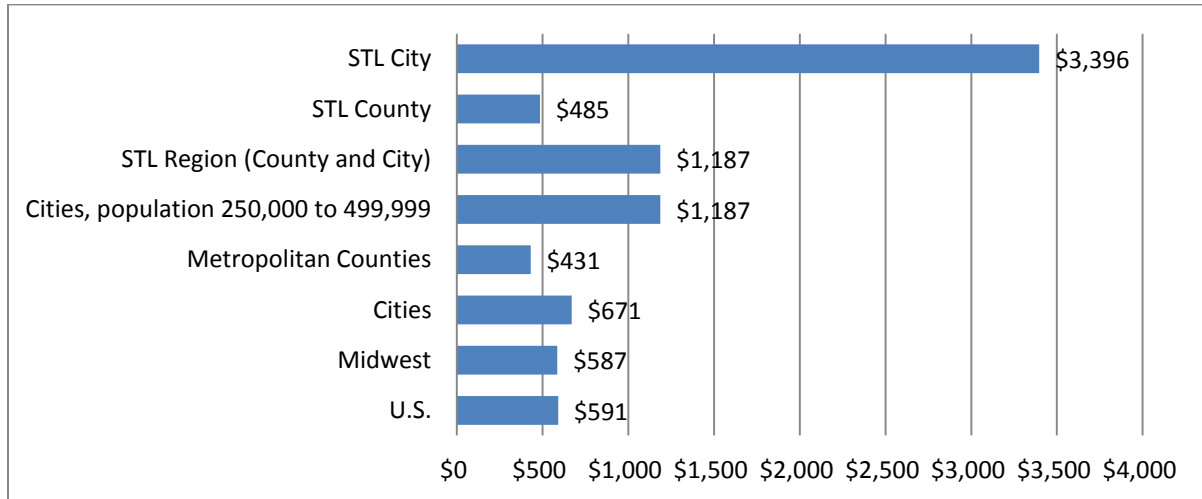
These costs are absorbed by community members, either directly as taxes for government functions such as operating jails, or as de facto taxes on the economic vitality of the region (such as lost productivity when victims are injured).

PERF next divided the costs of crime in St. Louis City and County by population figures, in order to produce a “cost per person” for each resident. We then compared these costs in St. Louis to other national and regional figures:

¹⁵ For more information on the RAND *Cost of Crime Calculator*, see <http://www.rand.org/jie/centers/quality-policing/cost-of-crime.html>.

¹⁶ Hidden in Plain Sight: What Cost-of-Crime Research Can Tell Us About Investing in Police. RAND Corporation, 2010. Table 1. http://www.rand.org/pubs/occasional_papers/OP279.html

Figure 3. Cost of FBI Index Crime, per resident, 2013



The cost of crime is highest in St. Louis City, at nearly \$3,400 per person per year; in St. Louis County, the cost is much lower, at \$485 per person per year. This pattern is similar to that of the Baltimore area, which we analyzed for comparative purposes. Crime in Baltimore City costs each resident \$3,071 per year; in the surrounding Baltimore County, the cost of crime is \$523 per person per year. For further benchmarking, we calculated the annual per capita cost of crime in the combined city-county departments in Indianapolis (\$1,800), New Orleans (\$2,955), and Louisville (\$872).

Table 5. Cost of FBI Index Crime, per resident, in selected areas, 2013

	Population (2013)	Cost	Cost per Person
NATIONAL	291,676,240*	\$172,475,537,525	\$591
METROPOLITAN COUNTIES, NATIONALLY	68,954,749	\$29,686,524,381	\$431
CITIES (1 million+)	25,735,804	\$22,332,648,481	\$868
CITIES (250-499k)	14,878,533	\$17,654,903,777	\$1,187
INDIANAPOLIS	850,220	\$1,530,515,716	\$1,800
LOUISVILLE	671,120	\$585,190,817	\$872
NEW ORLEANS	377,022	\$1,114,139,155	\$2,955

ST. LOUIS REGION	1,319,940	\$1,566,918,380	\$1,187
BALTIMORE REGION	1,445,987	\$2,341,798,424	\$1,620
St. Louis City	318,496	\$1,081,576,270	\$3,396
St. Louis County	1,001,444	\$485,342,110	\$485
Baltimore City	622,104	\$1,910,690,854	\$3,071
Baltimore County	823,883	\$431,107,570	\$523

*Population represents the number of people served by police agencies that report crime information to FBI's UCR system.

In addition to looking at the total cost of crime, we also examined the *costs of police services* in selected jurisdictions. In St. Louis City and County combined, the cost of providing police services was \$355 per resident per year. By comparison, in the Baltimore region (Baltimore City and County combined), police services cost \$438 per person per year. The Indianapolis, Louisville, and New Orleans regions are consolidated city-county policing models, and thus provide interesting perspectives. The annual cost of police services per person was lower in two of the three regional jurisdictions (\$242 in Indianapolis and \$257 in Louisville) and was approximately the same in New Orleans (\$357).

Table 6. Annual costs of crime and police services, per resident, in selected comparison areas

	Cost of Crime per person (2013)	Cost of Police Services per person (2014)
St. Louis Region	\$1,187	\$355
Baltimore Region	\$1,620	\$438
Indianapolis Region	\$1,800	\$242
Louisville Region	\$872	\$257
New Orleans Region	\$2,955	\$357
St. Louis City	\$3,396	\$597
St. Louis County	\$485	\$278
Baltimore City	\$3,071	\$713
Baltimore County	\$523	\$232

The cost of crime and the cost of policing in St. Louis City and many of the municipalities in St. Louis County area are high when compared with other jurisdictions. Maintaining the status quo means the region will be saddled with huge expenses—in terms of both dollars and personal hardship—for years to come.

However, by making targeted investments in policing and other services that could bring down the crime rate, the region has the opportunity to achieve dramatic cost savings as well. Given that each homicide is estimated to cost society approximately \$5.7 million, even a 10% reduction in homicides in the St. Louis region would save an estimated \$91 million. Creating systems that improve policing and drive down the crime rate makes sense from the standpoint of both public safety and economics.

Finding #3:

In many municipalities in St. Louis County, policing is driven by the need to generate revenue, and not by the public safety needs or priorities of the community.

A concern expressed by many participants in our Town Hall Meetings and focus groups was that in many communities, police priorities are not just misguided—they are the complete opposite of what residents want and expect. As one town hall participant put it, policing in her community is viewed by many as “another form of taxation,” rather than the proper role of protecting and serving the community. This feeling is especially strong in those municipalities where property and sales taxes (the primary sources of revenue in most St. Louis County municipalities) are lagging. In those communities, local officials have turned to fines associated with traffic tickets and municipal code citations issued by the police to plug revenue gaps for their local governments. One of our focus group participants put it this way: “It’s no secret that a lot of these municipal police officers are only supposed to be revenue drivers for their cities.”

This intense, widespread focus of the police on generating revenue is an anomaly that PERF has not seen elsewhere in the United States. It is considered a best practice in policing for municipal governments to write formal mission statements defining exactly what they want from their police departments. These mission statements often have many points in common (e.g., crime prevention is usually a high priority), while differing in emphasis according to the political or philosophical leanings of the jurisdiction on certain issues, such as immigration enforcement and civil liberties priorities. PERF is unaware of any police mission statement that makes any mention of generating revenue through fines and penalties, although that is clearly a high priority of some departments in St. Louis County.

Reliance on fees is concentrated in St. Louis County: In the aggregate, the 90 municipalities in St. Louis County account for 11% of Missouri’s total population, but bring in 34% of all municipal fines and fees statewide—a total of more than \$45 million in 2013.¹⁷ Of the 14 municipalities whose largest individual source of revenue is municipal fines and fees, 13 lie within the small area north of Olive Boulevard and within the boundary of I-270. Twenty of the 21 municipalities that obtain at least 20% of their budgets from fines and fees are in that same area. This emphasis on generating revenue has turned the justice

¹⁷ “Municipal Courts Report,” Executive Summary, Better Together, p. 2.
<http://www.bettertogetherstl.com/studies/public-safety/municipal-courts-report>

system on its head in some areas. Rather than attempting to prevent infractions and keep individuals *out of the justice system*, many police departments engage in practices that end up bringing more people *into the system* in an effort to bring more dollars into municipal coffers.

“Everyone’s got a horror story to tell”: In many communities, traffic enforcement is a major police focus, and a favored way to generate revenue. As former St. Louis Police Chief Tim Fitch told PERF, “Everyone’s got a horror story to tell about the police, and most of that horror story relates back to being ticketed for some minor violation.” We heard reports of some departments setting up “DUI checkpoints” (sometimes as early as 10 a.m.), not necessarily in an effort to take drunk drivers off the road, but rather to issue citations for other types of violations that would result in municipal court fines. For example, a 36-year-old resident of St. Louis told the St. Louis Post-Dispatch she was stopped at a Pine Lawn sobriety checkpoint in June 2014. After police ran her name, they discovered a warrant for failure to appear on a traffic case. She said police never tested her sobriety, and she was held in jail for two weeks in lieu of a \$350 bond she could not pay.¹⁸ Pine Lawn, a Mid-County community of just six-tenths of a square mile, issued more than 17,000 traffic citations during 2013. That’s the equivalent of more than five citations per resident.

In addition to traffic enforcement, St. Louis County police departments aggressively enforce a wide array of municipal code infractions, including offenses that often lack tightly written definitions, such as disturbing the peace, affray, or failure to comply. Many of these offenses serve to give police officers the opportunity to stop individuals and look for still more infractions. Further compounding the situation is the common practice of adding new fines and penalties, and even issuing arrest warrants, for individuals who fail to appear in municipal court on their original charge or fail to pay the original penalty on time.

A participant at Better Together’s January 2015 Town Hall Meeting said that her neighbor was fined for overgrown grass. The individual’s lawnmower was broken and he could not afford to get it fixed. A new fine was assessed on top of the existing fine, and that cost was compounded by a failure to appear fee. In Bel-Ridge, police issue citations for failing to subscribe to the city’s only approved trash collection service. Ferguson has a municipal code charge of failure to remove leaf debris, and has required violators to appear in court regardless of whether they are contesting the charges. Several Town Hall participants agreed that it is not unusual for a small infraction (such as overgrown grass, leaf debris, or a leaky gutter) to result in fines and fees that end up costing several times the original citation. “These municipalities are making their money on the backs of good people who can’t pay,” said one community leader.

Police and courts seen as working together to maximize revenue: As frustrated as many residents are with police actions in their communities, residents also understand that the police are not operating

¹⁸ “Protesters demand change at Pine Lawn police department and court,” by Jeremy Kohler. St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Feb. 5, 2015.

alone or in a vacuum. They are part of larger municipal court systems that have been described by Better Together as “punitive revenue centers” and “a blatant system of taxing residents in the poorest communities in the region.”¹⁹ In parts of St. Louis County, police and court practices go hand in hand in a seemingly coordinated effort to maximize revenue. The police feed the municipal court system by writing traffic tickets and other municipal violations. In turn, the courts (and the local officials who oversee them) encourage the police to do even more enforcement and to issue arrest warrants for those who fail to appear in municipal court.

In some cases, the relationship between the police and the courts is built into the very organizational structure of the municipality. In Ferguson, the municipal court lies organizationally within the Police Department. Court staff—including the Court Clerk who exercises broad discretion over the court’s operations—report directly to the chief of police, and the court is physically located within police headquarters.²⁰ Such close relationships undermine the court’s proper role as neutral arbiters of justice, and feed the perception in the community that the system is rigged against defendants.²¹

As one focus group participant told us: “These courts are terrible. There is a line out the door. You can’t bring your children or anyone else in with you. There’s no ATM—you pay cash or credit card but you don’t know what you owe until you get in the door. It’s predatory!”

Loss of driver’s license can create additional hardship: Beyond fines and fees and the possibility of jail time, many defendants in St. Louis County face another potential sanction when they get caught up in the municipal court system: suspension of their driver’s licenses. Under Missouri law, failure to pay on time a moving traffic violation, or failure to appear in court for such a violation, results in the suspension of driving privileges. Individuals caught in those circumstances are even less likely to appear for subsequent court dates, because getting to most municipal courts almost always involves driving, and thus risking being pulled over by the police and facing additional charges. We heard from many people that getting out of this cycle of missed court appearances and catching up on outstanding fines can be extremely difficult, especially for those who are unemployed or have low-wage jobs.

¹⁹ Ibid 15, p.1.

²⁰ During its investigation of the Ferguson Police Department, the Justice Department was informed by Ferguson officials that they were considering placing the municipal court under the supervision of the City Finance Director.

²¹ Recent examinations of the municipal courts in St. Louis County found that many of them make it difficult for defendants to easily resolve their cases. This is done by limiting court hours to just a few sessions a month, providing few (if any) alternatives to appearing in person, failing to provide clear information on where and how to pay a ticket, and not always being transparent about the entire process and the consequences for not complying with it. The result is that many defendants run afoul of the courts’ requirements, which only results in additional fines and fees—and, often, warrants for their arrest. There have been reports of cases in which individuals were arrested without ever knowing that they had an outstanding warrant against them.

See www.bettertogetherstl.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/BT-Municipal-Courts-Report-Full-Report1.pdf and <https://www.dropbox.com/s/vwptqn3mhq9xvy7/ArchCity%20Defenders%20Municipal%20Courts%20Whitepaper.pdf>.

Relying on fines and fees for minor offenses to cover basic revenue needs, and then using the threat of incarceration to exact payment, is wrong, and is correctly seen by residents as lacking legitimacy. Such practices can create hardships for residents who have not committed any serious offense, and for their families. People who are incarcerated or cannot drive because they failed to appear in court are more likely to lose their jobs, their means of transportation, and their housing.

Kentucky aims to reduce jailing of minor offenders: Officials in other jurisdictions have recognized the inefficiencies and negative consequences of charging, arresting, and holding large numbers of offenders cited for traffic and minor misdemeanor offenses. For example, in 2008, the police chiefs in Campbell County, Kentucky (across the Ohio River from Cincinnati), came together at the request of the County Judge Executive and implemented a local policy whereby police officers making arrests for most minor traffic and misdemeanor offenses would “cite and release,” rather than holding defendants in the county jail. It soon became clear that the program was reducing costs to the county and avoiding unnecessary and costly disruptions to the lives of residents stopped by the police. After the new policy was implemented, “We significantly reduced the cost to our county,” Alexandria, KY Police Chief Mike Ward wrote in an online policing publication. “We were not paying for people to sit in jail waiting for trial.... [The change in policy] was a major achievement, because so many people lost their jobs due to being incarcerated for only a few days.”²² What started as an isolated pilot program has since been established statewide. St. Louis County could benefit from a similar, region-wide approach.

Finding #4:

The inappropriate, revenue-driven mission of the police is often directed by local officials looking to fund municipal government.

Nearly every constituency we engaged in this project recognized that the focus on revenue generation typically does not start with the police: it usually starts with elected officials who reprioritize police activities to focus on money over public safety. In an interview with PERF, Former St. Louis County Police Chief Tim Fitch said that the police should not be blamed for policies dictated by elected officials. “I’ve always blamed it on the municipal officials who force their police to do that,” Fitch said. A Town Hall Meeting participant said, “In the current system, police are being asked to play a role [generating revenue] that they shouldn’t have to play.”

In many municipalities in St. Louis County, anticipated court revenues are included as line items in the overall operating budgets—in essence, setting a monetary “target” for the police and the courts to reach, regardless of the level of crime or violations occurring within their communities. As some

²² “[Safe, Fair and Effective Pretrial Justice Is Crucial to Law Enforcement](http://theiacpblog.org/2015/04/02/safe-fair-and-effective-pretrial-justice-is-crucial-to-law-enforcement/),” by Mike Ward. Official Blog of the International Association of Chiefs of Police, April 2, 2015. <http://theiacpblog.org/2015/04/02/safe-fair-and-effective-pretrial-justice-is-crucial-to-law-enforcement/>

municipalities have seen traditional sources of revenue such as sales taxes stagnate, it is not uncommon for them to increase court revenue targets each year. For example, Ferguson collected \$1.38 million in court fines and fees in 2010, but budgeted for \$2.63 million in 2014.

Meeting those targets is something that many local leaders pay close attention to. In Ferguson, the Justice Department uncovered emails in which the Finance Director warned the Police Chief in 2010 that “unless ticket writing ramps up significantly before the end of the year, it will be hard to significantly raise collections next year.... Given that we are looking at a substantial sales tax shortfall, it’s not an insignificant issue.” In another email, the Police Chief said he would try to raise court fees not by the anticipated 7.5%, but by 10%. Ferguson police officers from all ranks told Justice Department investigators that revenue generation “is stressed heavily within the police department, and that message comes from City leadership.”²³

In Edmundson, a North County community of just over 800 people, the Mayor went so far as to imply that officers’ compensation would be affected by how many tickets the police wrote. In an April 2014 memo, titled “Traffic tickets” and sent to all police sergeants and patrol officers, the Mayor noted a “marked downturn in traffic and other tickets being written by your department” and reminded officers that “the tickets that you write do add to the revenue on which the P.D. budget is established and will directly affect pay adjustments at budget time.”²⁴

In Ferguson, the municipal court provided police with monthly reports on the number of tickets issued by each officer. Supervisors reportedly posted the lists inside the police station as a way to encourage officers to write more tickets. When officers failed to meet “productivity” goals, supervisors were instructed to change officers’ assignments or even impose discipline. Officers were also reminded that “self-initiated activity” would be considered in upcoming promotional processes.²⁵

Police officers oppose ticket quotas: Police officers and union representatives interviewed by PERF said they strongly opposed any ticket quotas—stated or implied—being placed on officers. Many expressed exasperation at being blamed for issues and policies set by municipal governments and their political leaders. In a meeting with PERF, one area police official said, “These priorities [traffic enforcement] are set by local politicians and residents’ complaints, not my department.” A St. Louis area journalist interviewed by PERF said, “The public hates ticket quotas, and cops don’t like them either.”

Macks Creek Law may be strengthened: In recent years, the Missouri legislature has tried to reduce the overreliance on municipal court fines and fees to fund local government. A 2013 state statute, commonly known as Macks Creek law, specifies that no municipality may collect more than 30% of its

²³ “Investigation of the Ferguson Police Department,” U.S. Department of Justice. March 4, 2015, p. 2. http://www.justice.gov/sites/default/files/opa/press-releases/attachments/2015/03/04/ferguson_police_department_report_1.pdf

²⁴ “Edmundson Ticket Memo.” <http://www.scribd.com/doc/220153867/Edmundson-Ticket-Memo>.

²⁵ Ibid. 21, pp. 11-12.

annual general operating revenue from traffic tickets and court fees, with any revenue above that threshold transferred to the public schools. However, in its recent report on the municipal courts, Better Together concluded that Macks Creek Law “is rarely meaningfully enforced at either the court or circuit level.”²⁶

In late 2014, the Missouri Attorney General, joined by the State Auditor and members of the Missouri Legislature, filed a lawsuit against 13 North County municipalities, alleging they exceeded the cap on court revenue as a percentage of total operating revenue for the municipalities. In March 2015, the Attorney General dropped several municipalities from the lawsuit after they had submitted financial reports or re-filed their reports with updated information.

More recently, both the Missouri House and Senate have passed legislation that would strengthen the Macks Creek law by lowering the percentage of operating revenue that municipalities in St. Louis County could raise from traffic tickets. The House bill sets the cap at 15%; the Senate bill would gradually lower the cap to 10% in urban municipalities and 20% in more rural areas. The legislation would also reform some of the municipal court procedures that many have said are unfair, including excessive fines and the threat of jail for failure to pay. This type of state intervention, or potential intervention by the U.S. Justice Department’s Civil Rights Division, may dramatically alter the mission and priorities of many municipal police departments in St. Louis County.

Finding #5:

Most residents want their police departments to engage in serious and meaningful community-based policing, but because of the emphasis placed on generating revenue, community policing is de-emphasized or non-existent in many jurisdictions.

As much as we heard concerns about what some police departments are doing in terms of aggressively issuing tickets and citations, we also heard frequent complaints about what officers are *not* doing—namely, not engaging with residents in positive, productive ways to enhance community safety. One focus group meeting participant summed it up this way: “Maybe if police could stop writing tickets to support their governments, they could actually do some real community-oriented policing.”

“Don’t just drive by. Stop and say hello.” In almost every meeting we convened, residents expressed the desire for traditional “beat cops” who know residents. A common complaint was that in many communities, officers seldom get out of their police cars, “walk the beat,” or otherwise seek to engage in real community policing. “Don’t just drive by,” said one town hall participant. “Stop and say hello.” Ironically, one of the perceived benefits of having small, locally controlled departments is the increased

²⁶ “Municipal Courts Report,” Executive Summary, Better Together, p. 2.

opportunity for developing strong police-community relationships. But it appears that such partnerships are often the weakest in some of the smallest and most cash-strapped municipalities.

“People are willing to pay good money for safety when it works,” said one meeting participant. This sentiment was expressed in several focus groups and Town Halls Meetings. In general, community members support paying taxes for an effective police agency. Residents of Bridgeton, for example, said they were very pleased with the level of police services they receive. Participants at the February 9, 2015, Town Hall Meeting said that the Bridgeton Police Department’s priorities are in line with those of the community. One Bridgeton resident explained, “We love our police department because they have high hiring standards, quality training programs, and are accountable for their actions. The department is friendly to the community, they help our youth with problems, they’re invested in the community, and they reflect our values and needs.”

In other communities, however, the activities needed to support revenue-driven policing end up robbing officers of the time they might be able to devote to community policing. For example, many municipalities do not operate their own detention facilities and instead contract with other jurisdictions or the County. So when a defendant (often a minor violator who failed to appear in court) needs to be transported to jail, the police department must take one of its on-duty officers out of service. In smaller departments with only a few officers on duty at any given time, this can mean a sizeable percentage of their force is unavailable.

Officer discretion should be used to improve police-community relationships: Under community policing, the notion of “officer discretion” is considered critically important. Most often, it refers to instances in which police officers step back from overly strict interpretation of the law and use their judgment on how best to approach a problem. Our examination found that in some communities, the concept of police discretion has been turned on its head, as officers end up alienating community members, rather than establishing working relationships with them.

Following are several such reports:

- An attendee at a Town Hall Meeting said that when police in Bellefontaine Neighbors discovered that his home had been broken into, the officers did not attempt to contact the homeowner, who was not at home, to tell him of the burglary. But they did issue three animal control citations for dogs kept at his home.
- One local faith leader shared a story where his identity was questioned by officers when his home burglar alarm went off accidentally. The officer asked him for proof of residency and would not accept his driver’s license or even the picture of him on the wall as proof that he lived in the home. “Thankfully, the sergeant [who knew the homeowner personally] came by and straightened things out,” the man said. “I don’t know what would have happened to me if the sergeant hadn’t been driving by.”

- Another town hall attendee recounted an encounter where she was hit across the head in a parking lot while holding her two-year-old child. She fought back against her attacker, but when police arrived, she ended up in handcuffs, not the person who hit her. Though she and bystanders tried to explain that she had been attacked, the officer dismissed her story and cited her for assault. The officer reportedly advised, “In the future, when you’re being attacked, just go run and hide. Don’t fight back.” Charges against the woman were subsequently dropped by the prosecuting attorney.
- The Justice Department documented instances in Ferguson in which concerned friends or family members showed up at the scene of vehicle accidents involving people they knew, only to end up being arrested and jailed themselves.²⁷
- A community leader at a PERF meeting cited the case of a young man in his neighborhood walking home and being handcuffed and thrown into the back of a police vehicle while the officer checked his identity. “This was a straight A student just trying to get home,” the person said.

The focus of many police departments on revenue at the expense of community policing is eroding the public’s trust and undermining residents’ cooperation in investigations and crime prevention efforts. Public safety and well as officer safety suffer as a result. “The police should be fighting crime, not the community,” said Rev. Tommie Pierson of the Greater St. Mark’s Family Church.

Furthermore, in a region with so many small communities, the erosion of trust in any one police department can undermine overall trust in “the police.” The Justice Department noted this phenomenon in its report on Ferguson: “It appears clear that individuals’ experiences with other law enforcement agencies in St. Louis County ... in many instances have contributed to a general distrust of law enforcement that impacts interactions with the Ferguson police and municipal court.”²⁸ This “spill-over” effect has the potential to set back policing, even in municipalities that have high standards and are trying to work effectively with the community.

Finding #6:

Policing is fragmented, which undermines efficiency and hurts operations.

As detailed earlier in this report (see especially Table 1), policing in the St. Louis region is highly fragmented, with 60 different police departments of varying sizes and service levels, often serving small geographic areas. Some of these departments have as few as five officers, and some patrol areas are not much larger than one-tenth of a square mile.

²⁷ Ibid. 21, p. 81.

²⁸ Ibid. 21, p. 79.

The fragmentation of policing has consequences. First, it can cause confusion and anxiety among residents and other people traveling through the region. This problem is especially acute in the North and Mid County areas. One busy 10-mile stretch of Route 115 (also known as Natural Bridge Road) crosses through 16 different municipalities, meaning that a motorist with a traffic violation such as expired license plates could get pulled over for the same violation in multiple jurisdictions on a single trip. Further complicating the situation is the fact that jurisdictions are likely to have their own municipal codes, their own enforcement strategies, their own municipal court systems, and their own fine and fee structures.²⁹ In our meetings, we heard from several residents who said they purposefully altered their travel routes to avoid jurisdictions where they have had negative experiences.

Inefficiencies and duplication of effort: The fragmentation of policing also creates inefficiencies. Some jurisdictions do share some services, such as detention, dispatch, major crime investigations, and crime scene processing. However, the costs for many items, such as vehicles, equipment, training, and police administration, are borne by each individual municipality, some of which have only a handful of officers. Communities are missing out on efficiencies of scale that would come from larger, bulk purchases of some items and less overhead.

One major area where police fragmentation has created inefficiencies is in emergency dispatch. Better Together has previously reported on the range of public safety answering points (PSAPs) in the St. Louis region. Each PSAP represents an independent dispatch center for use by police, fire, EMS, and other emergency services.

Table 7. Public Safety Answering Points in the St. Louis region

PSAP	# of Police Departments Served
Ballwin PD	2
Berkeley PD	1
Bridgeton PD	1
Crestwood PD	1
Des Peres PD	1
East Central Dispatch Center	8
Ferguson PD	4
Florissant PD	1
Glendale PD	2
Hazelwood PD	1
Kirkwood PD	1
Ladue PD	1
Maryland Heights PD	1
Overland PD	1
St. Ann PD	4
St. Louis City PD Dispatch	1

²⁹ In April 2015, 80 of the 82 municipal courts in St. Louis County voluntarily agreed to a uniform standard for fines and court fees.

St. Louis County PD	23
Sunset Hills PD	1
University City PD	1
West Central Dispatch Center	3

There are 20 active PSAPs serving the St. Louis region, excluding Pacific’s PSAP.³⁰ Given that approximately two-thirds of these PSAPs serve only one municipality, there is likely an opportunity for pooling resources with greater efficiency.

This issue was raised at some of our Town Hall Meetings. A resident of unincorporated St. Louis County who participated in the January 8, 2015 meeting explained that it may take over 20 minutes for the county police to respond when she calls the police. “It doesn’t make any sense. I live right next to the Eureka Police Department. Why can’t they just respond?” Another participant at this meeting said that when he was out driving and saw an apparently drunk driver, he tried to report it, but he kept getting transferred from one dispatch center to another, or told to call another department, because the drunk driver was passing through so many different municipalities.

The fragmentation of policing has also contributed to dramatic variations in the quality and professionalism of police services from one community to another. Hiring standards, policies, training, and pay levels can vary dramatically among the region’s police departments, and there are few, if any, regional standards. (See Finding #7, below, for a more extensive discussion of this topic.)

Finally, the large number of police departments can make it difficult for agencies to form strong, regional partnerships with one another. St. Louis County Police Chief John Belmar noted: “It is not realistic for my agency to have close relationships with five dozen different departments. Inter-agency coordination and cooperation—from everyday policing to major investigations and events—would be much easier if there were a more manageable number of municipal departments.”

It should be noted that several of the mayors and city managers we spoke with defended the current system of municipalities and municipal police departments, saying that “keeping it local” helps ensure that the community’s needs are heard and addressed. Especially in North County, municipal leaders expressed concern about being disenfranchised if they were to consolidate with St. Louis County or another jurisdiction. In the necessary triage of calls that would take place in larger areas served by larger departments, there was concern that smaller communities would be neglected. However, some of these departments were the same ones where community policing is neglected in favor of revenue generation, and where many residents do not trust the police.

³⁰ For our purposes, we have not included Pacific PD. While a small portion of the City of Pacific is in St. Louis County, the vast majority is within Franklin County. Pacific PD already has numerous contract and mutual aid agreements, but with jurisdictions outside of St. Louis County.

Finding #7:

Police standards, training, pay, and professionalism vary dramatically from agency to agency.

Throughout our study, we heard concerns about the lack of standards for the policing profession as a whole, and lack of consistency from agency to agency. The issue was raised by police professionals, municipal leaders, members of the news media, community leaders, and individual residents. We repeatedly heard that when traveling throughout the region, residents do not always receive a consistent level of policing that is fair, just, professional, and free of bias. As one city manager pointed out during a PERF focus group session, there might not be “one size that fits all” when it comes to policing in St. Louis City and County, but there should be a basic, consistent level of service that all residents should expect. A participant at the January 7, 2015, Town Hall Meeting echoed this sentiment: “Policing is different across the County. We all want to be treated with respect and the same level of service, regardless of what town we are in. We understand the value in local policing, but there is a lack of quality control.”

Just one-quarter of the police departments in St. Louis City and County are either accredited by the national Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) or certified by the Missouri Police Chiefs Charitable Foundation. Of the 10 agencies currently accredited by CALEA, only one—the Florissant Police Department—is in north county.³¹ CALEA accreditation is a voluntary process by which a police agency demonstrates that it has adopted policies on a wide range of practices in policing. The process of securing and retaining accreditation can be extensive and costly, especially for smaller jurisdictions. Still, CALEA accreditation is one measure of professionalism among police agencies, because it requires agencies to take the time and trouble to develop and adopt written policies, and departments of all sizes are CALEA-accredited.

Variations in policies and practices were found in the following areas:

Use of force: The lack of standards was cited in a number of areas, including hiring (see Finding #8, below), training, pay, equipment, disciplinary procedures, and policies. An area of strong concern was police use of force. In Town Hall Meetings, we heard from residents who complained that some police officers were quick to use force, that use-of-force incidents are not taken seriously by police departments, and that officers who use force are not held accountable. We also heard that some residents were reluctant or afraid to report police use of force or other allegations of misconduct, for fear that they or their loved ones would be retaliated against. Local leaders and residents who participated in our meetings said police needed additional training in use-of-force scenarios and

³¹ The municipal or regional law enforcement agencies accredited by CALEA are Chesterfield, Clayton, Creve Couer, Florissant, Maplewood, Richmond Heights, Shrewsbury, St. Louis County, St. Louis Metropolitan, and Webster Groves. In addition, the University of Missouri St. Louis Police Department is accredited; the Maryland Heights Police Department is currently in the self-assessment phase of CALEA accreditation.

especially de-escalation techniques, which thousands of police agencies have adopted to reduce the use of force when police encounter persons with mental illness or other conditions that cause them to behave erratically.³² One element of de-escalation is “slowing down” a tense situation, as one participant noted. One town hall participant put it this way: “If unarmed officers in Ireland can de-escalate someone with a knife, why can’t officers in the U.S. do it without a gun?”

Legal experts we spoke with also pointed out that Missouri’s current use-of-force law is not in line with the Supreme Court’s landmark 1985 decision in *Tennessee v. Garner*, which prohibits the use of deadly force against an unarmed suspect who is fleeing from the police unless the officer “has probable cause to believe that the suspect poses a significant threat of death or serious physical injury to the officer or others.” Police chiefs and police union leaders agreed that the state’s statute should be updated.

Training: On the broader issue of training, residents and community leaders were in agreement that police officers needed not just more training, but new and different types of training. Lewis Reed, President of the Board of Aldermen for St. Louis City, put it bluntly in an interview: “We need complete reform in our training academies from top to bottom. We need a unified training plan across the region that reflects today’s standards and expectations for police.” Residents and community leaders said that particular emphasis should be placed on training in such areas as community relations, cultural competency, constitutional rights, and communications. Some participants at Better Together Town Halls and other meetings identified other specialized areas where more effective training is needed:

- **Individuals with mental health problems.** Several community members said officers need more training in how to interact with persons with mental illness or other conditions that can cause them to misunderstand police and behave dangerously. In its investigation on Ferguson, the Justice Department found that officers there were often quick to use force on individuals who may lack the physical or cognitive abilities to understand police orders.³³
- **Non-English speaking individuals.** Focus group participants recommended that police develop standard protocols and receive additional training in working with non-English speaking individuals. They said that the patchwork of municipalities in St. Louis County can be difficult for anyone to understand, and is especially difficult for residents with a limited understanding of English. Participants also recommended that materials such as traffic citations and municipal court instructions be available in multiple languages in every community.
- **Members of the LGBT community.** Leaders of PROMO (Promoting Equality for All Missourians) said that additional training and resources are needed on police interactions with the region’s

³² See “An Integrated Approach to De-Escalation and Minimizing Use of Force.” Police Executive Research Forum, 2012.

http://www.policeforum.org/assets/docs/Critical_Issues_Series/an%20integrated%20approach%20to%20de-escalation%20and%20minimizing%20use%20of%20force%202012.pdf

³³ “Investigation of the Ferguson Police Department,” U.S. Department of Justice. March 4, 2015, p. 36-37.

lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender communities. Andrew Shaughnessy, PROMO's policy director, applauded efforts in St. Louis City and some other municipalities to proactively engage with lesbian, gay, and bisexual residents, and recommended that there be additional liaison officers in other municipalities as well. However, he noted that cultural competency training for working with transgender residents was needed in almost all departments. Others recommended specialized training on domestic violence issues in the LGBT community.

State oversight: Another concern about training that emerged during our research involved state mandates for training and the ability of the Missouri Peace Officers Standards and Training (POST) program to monitor training requirements statewide. Missouri state law requires that all officers in St. Louis City and St. Louis County have a Class A License. In order to obtain a Class A License, an individual must successfully complete 600 hours of basic training. The state cannot require more, but a local jurisdiction can. Currently, the St. Louis County and Municipal Police Academy has a 916-hour basic curriculum; the St. Louis City Police Academy spans 28 weeks, which equates to 1,120 hours of instruction. While licensed training centers cover a full range of topics in basic training, state law mandates only one specific block of training for all recruit officers in the state: 30 hours devoted to “the investigation and management of cases involving domestic and family violence.”³⁴ Some of the people we spoke with expressed concern that this one state mandate is inadequate, especially in the current dynamic environment of policing in St. Louis City and County.

Missouri law also requires that to maintain their certification, Class A licensees must complete 48 hours of continuing education over a three-year period. Again, Missouri law contains only one continuing-education mandate for licensed officers who make traffic stops: they must complete three hours of training within each three-year reporting period concerning “the prohibition against racial profiling.”³⁵ Our examination revealed two concerns about continuing education. First, the number of required hours is insufficient; and second, the state's POST program cannot effectively monitor continuing education statewide. The latter issue has been a concern for years. In 2005, the Missouri State Auditor found that POST had neither the statutory authority, nor the systems and resources, to track continuing education among Missouri peace officers and to ensure they are meeting the required standards.³⁶ Ten years later, POST is still severely underfunded.

Differences in pay. Another issue that fundamentally impacts police performance and consistency is pay. Although we were unable to undertake a thorough analysis of officer pay because some agencies declined to provide data, anecdotal evidence suggests that pay levels for police vary widely from community to community, with some municipalities paying their officers wages well below industry

³⁴ Missouri Revised Statutes, 590.040-3.

³⁵ Missouri Revised Statutes, 590.050-1.

³⁶ Missouri State Auditor, “Peace Officers Standards and Training Program,” Report no. 2005-10.

standards. In many communities, low pay leads to high turnover among officers, which can undermine opportunities for community policing and increase overall costs for recruitment and training.

Some community leaders noted that pay and working conditions in municipal police departments seem to be lower than among the region's fire services, which could be another disincentive to attracting and retaining quality officers. Some of the groups we spoke with advocated greater uniformity in salary and benefits for police officers, as a way to equalize service levels. Beyond pay, promotional opportunities and effective pension systems are "non-existent" in many departments, according to Roger Goldman, Professor Emeritus at the Saint Louis University School of Law and an expert on police licensing and standards.

Finding #8:

Through a process known as the "muni shuffle," police officers with disciplinary or performance issues slip through the cracks and move from department to department. Part of the blame lies with a severely underfunded state oversight system.

The term "muni shuffle" is ubiquitous in the St. Louis region. Nearly every constituency that we met with used the phrase at least once in our discussions. "Muni shuffle" describes a two-step process in which 1) a police department separates a problem officer before completing a formal disciplinary proceeding that might cost the officer his or her state-issued police certificate; and then 2) another department, eager to find an already trained and certified officer at a low cost, hires the officer without fully investigating his or her background. The fact that the muni shuffle was the subject of a St. Louis Post-Dispatch investigative series back on 2003,³⁷ yet remains a common occurrence today, is cause for concern.

The muni shuffle was universally condemned by everyone with whom we met. Many individuals expressed concern over the inherent problem that the muni shuffle causes for low-income cities: officers engaged in the muni shuffle often end up in the poorest, often high-crime communities, including some of those in North and Mid County. One local municipal leader said, "When these guys do something bad and they get fired from one of the better departments, they get hired somewhere else, making less money. The citizens in these communities deserve better services than what they're getting." A focus group participant said, "We need to establish disincentives for departments who hire these guys."

Probably the biggest motivation for departments to engage in the muni shuffle is money, even if it means overlooking previous misconduct by the officers. Departments can save on training costs by

³⁷ "Bad cops bounce from city to city," by Trisha L. Howard and Heather Ratcliffe. St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Dec. 1, 2003. http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/crime-and-courts/part-ii-bad-cops-bounce-from-city-to-city/article_e9dd169a-2cba-5d17-8c29-395bf5716b64.html

hiring officers who have already completed the 600 hours of basic training and are licensed, and they can get newly hired officers on the street more quickly. Professor Goldman of the Saint Louis University School of Law says that the muni shuffle happens in “case after case,” especially in parts of St. Louis County where municipal governments are strapped for cash and need additional police officers to write tickets and citations that will generate revenue.

POST system inadequate: While money may be the prime motivation behind the muni shuffle, one of its primary enablers is a severely underfunded and understaffed monitoring and investigative system operated by the state’s POST program. Under state law, the chief executive of each law enforcement agency is required to report within 30 days the commissioning of any peace officer. Similarly, the chief is required to report, also within 30 days, when an officer departs that agency or otherwise ceases to be commissioned, including the circumstances under which the officer left. In addition, the Director of the Missouri Department of Public Safety is empowered to discipline peace officers throughout the state for criminal offenses or other violations or for conditions that make the officer unfit to perform his or her duties. In this respect, Missouri’s *policy* for disciplining officers is considered comparatively progressive, because an officer does not have to be convicted of a crime to lose his or her license.

In practice, the ability of the State to monitor hirings and firings and to discipline officers has been severely limited for years. As long ago as 2005, the Missouri State Auditor found that the required notifications to the state were not being done on a consistent basis, that the state POST’s system for logging and tracking complaints was “inadequate,” and that the time it took to initiate and complete investigations was excessively long.³⁸ The Department of Public Safety’s response to that audit focused largely on the fact that the POST program was underfunded, with just one full-time investigator at the time handling 100 or more active complaints statewide at any one time. Today, the POST program is still severely under-resourced, with just two investigators statewide, and the system still relies on the reporting of local law enforcement executives. One focus group participant concluded, “The Missouri POST Program needs more teeth and leverage to hold chiefs accountable for not reporting.”

We were told that in some circumstances, local chiefs find it easier to simply allow a problem officer to resign, before initiating disciplinary proceedings that might lead to the suspension of an officer’s license. As one union official we interviewed described the process, officers typically are told they can “resign right now or resign at 4 p.m. under charges.” State statutes do provide for completed investigations of officer misconduct to be made available to any “hiring law enforcement agency.”³⁹ However, when officers are allowed to resign before investigations are completed, those officers may slip through the cracks of the disciplinary process, maintain their licenses, and be free to take jobs at other departments.

³⁸ Missouri State Auditor, “Peace Officers Standards and Training Program,” Report no. 2005-10.

³⁹ Missouri Revised Statutes, 590.118.1.

Sharing of information is inconsistent: In its Model Minimum Standards, the International Association of Directors of Law Enforcement Standards and Training (IADLEST) recommends that, on the request of a law enforcement agency conducting a background investigation on a potential applicant, “another law enforcement agency employing, previously employing or having conducted a complete or partial background investigation on the applicant should advise the requesting agency of any known misconduct.”⁴⁰ Our examination revealed that some St. Louis County agencies do make such inquiries and share information with other departments on an informal, ad hoc basis. (As one police chief told us, “Pick up the damn phone and ask ‘What’s the deal with this guy?’ ” who is applying to be a police officer.) However, there is no uniform, comprehensive system for collecting and sharing this information. This undermines the ability of agencies to thoroughly investigate officer applicants, and enables the muni shuffle to continue. One focus group participant recommended that “there should be some type of ‘insurance rating’ on the high liability candidates, so that departments know to steer clear.”

The St. Louis area is not unique in facing this issue. In other jurisdictions, such as Chattanooga, Tennessee, forward-thinking police chiefs are working to ensure that officers who are fired by one department cannot simply take a new job in another department.⁴¹

Finding #9:

The issue of race—and perceived racial bias against African-Americans in particular—looms over the entire justice system. Racial tensions between the police and large segments of the community are holding back progress.

Any analysis of policing in St. Louis City and County, and any attempt to improve policing services, must address the issue of race directly and honestly. Race is at the heart of every aspect of this study. On issue after issue, the matter of racial tensions and perceived racial bias was raised by many of the people we spoke with. One common theme we heard is that in some communities, the police and the entire justice system unfairly target people of color, in particular African-Americans. This feeling was acknowledged by many white residents as well as African-Americans.

Racial disparities can be found in all aspects of the justice system, beginning with traffic stops. Missouri law mandates that every time a police officer stops a driver in a motor vehicle, the officer is required to record information about the stop, including the age, gender, and race of the motorist. The state Attorney General analyzes the data from local and state agencies and compiles an annual report.⁴² As

⁴⁰ IADLEST Model Minimum Standards, 6.0.7.1.

⁴¹ “Chattanooga police chief says fired cops shouldn't work as officers again,” by Shelly Bradbury. Chattanooga Times Free Press, Apr. 26, 2015. <http://www.timesfreepress.com/news/local/story/2015/apr/26/fletcher-says-fired-cops-shouldnt-work-office/300842/>

⁴² Missouri Revised Statutes, 590.650.

part of that annual report, the Attorney General calculates a “disparity index” for each reporting agency and the state as a whole.

Statewide in 2013 (the last year for which data are available), African-Americans had a disparity index of 1.59, meaning they were pulled over at a rate 59 percent greater than would be expected based solely on their proportion of the population aged 16 and older.⁴³ The disparity index for African-Americans has increased in 11 of the last 14 years for which data has been collected, rising from 1.27 in the year 2000.

In many parts of St. Louis City and County, the disparity index was dramatically higher than the statewide figure. The City of St. Louis and 15 municipalities in St. Louis County had a disparity index that exceeded 5.0 in 2013. St. Louis County’s disparity index was 2.99 in 2013.

Table 8. Municipalities with a Disparity Index for African-Americans greater than 5.0, 2013

Area	Disparity Index
Beverly Hills	8.55
Moline Acres	8.52
Country Club Hills	8.4
Hillsdale	8.14
Ferguson	7.89
Pagedale	7.53
Pine Lawn	7
Bel-Ridge	6.94
Florissant	6.54
Bel-Nor	6.47
St. Louis City	6.21
Calverton Park	5.99
Berkeley	5.8
Bellefontaine Neighbors	5.6

Furthermore, data compiled by the Attorney General indicate that in addition to being pulled over more frequently than whites, African-Americans are searched and arrested at higher rates. Statewide, in 2013, African-Americans were 1.89 times more likely to be searched than whites following a traffic stop, and 1.84 times more likely to be arrested. The data also indicate that when white motorists are searched,

⁴³ “2013 Vehicle Stops Executive Summary,” Missouri Attorney General Chris Koster. <https://ago.mo.gov/divisions/litigation/vehicle-stops-report/vehicle-stops-report---2013-executive-summary#findings>

they are found to have contraband more frequently than African-Americans, with a 26.3% “hit rate” for whites, compared with 18.8% for African-Americans.⁴⁴

The disparity index and other indicators in the State Attorney General’s report may be imperfect measures of racial bias in policing, and several of the police officials we spoke with said the aggregate numbers do not always present a complete or accurate picture. On each individual traffic stop, a number of factors can impact why a motorist was pulled over and whether they were searched or arrested. However, the overall numbers show extreme disparities that cannot be explained.

Participants at our Town Hall Meetings said their experiences support the statistics: Many African-Americans who participated in our Town Hall Meetings and focus groups said they did not need statistical data to tell them the system is biased. Many reported that they or their family members had been stopped by police (often multiple times and for questionable reasons, such as “braking too often”), and when they got to municipal court, they encountered long lines of largely African-Americans waiting their turn. As one community leader put it, “Everyone speeds, but African-Americans are pulled over more frequently for speeding.”

The Justice Department found a disparate impact on African-Americans throughout Ferguson’s justice system. “African-Americans are disproportionately represented at nearly every stage of Ferguson law enforcement, from initial police contact to final disposition of a case in municipal court...part of a comprehensive municipal justice system that, at each juncture, enforces the law more harshly against black people than others.”⁴⁵ Many of the individuals we spoke with said the same impact can be found in many other communities. It is clear that any efforts to improve policing and the administration of justice in St. Louis City and County must address the issue of racial disparity—actual and perceived.

Finding #10:

Police interactions with young people are often strained, and the lack of trust threatens to undermine policing efforts now and in the future.

Another issue we paid close attention to was police interactions with young people. This issue is important because it impacts police-community relationships today, and shapes how those relationships will develop in the future and how effective policing will be. To gain insight into this issue, we held a focus group with students from Carnahan High School of the Future in St. Louis, and we encouraged youth participation in Town Hall Meetings.

Some youths see police as a threat: In general, the message from many young people—especially young African-Americans—is that they often see the police as a threat, not as a protector. “I always run

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ “Investigation of the Ferguson Police Department,” U.S. Department of Justice. March 4, 2015, p. 63.

from the police. My dad tells me to,” said one of the students. Students complained that officers were frequently aggressive, especially when the young people were “just hanging out.” They claimed that officers were quick to pull their Tasers or other weapons when confronting young people and thus ended up escalating encounters. A young participant at the January 15, 2015 Town Hall said, “The kids in my school are great people, but we’re scared of the police.” He said that his fellow students, who have not done anything wrong, should be able to see the police as a resource, but are instead are generally fearful of the police.

Beyond instances of the use or threat of force, several Carnahan students related anecdotes of feeling harassed by the police. One student told of being handcuffed and written a ticket in Richmond Heights when he was attempting to get more money to put onto his train fare card. Another said he and other African-Americans were carded for curfew when playing basketball; non-African-Americans were not challenged, the student said. Another student told of being stopped, searched, and forced to sit in the snow when walking to the local store.

Weaknesses in School Resource Officer programs: In its examination of Ferguson, the Justice Department found similar concerns and similar tensions between the police and young people. “FPD’s approach to policing impacts how its officers interact with students...leading them to treat routine discipline issues as criminal matters and to use force when communication and de-escalation techniques would likely resolve the conflict.”⁴⁶ The investigation highlighted one School Resource Officer (SRO) at a Ferguson middle school who arrested a 14-year-old boy for failure to comply when the student would not leave the classroom after getting into a verbal argument with another student. The situation escalated, with the officer “drive-stunning” (direct contact with the body) the student with his Taser in the classroom. The Justice Department noted that Ferguson SROs viewed increased arrests as a positive result of their work.

The effectiveness of SROs was raised by several people with whom we spoke. One focus group participant pointed out that municipal police boundaries and school district boundaries do not always align, which can make it difficult to assign and manage SROs effectively. In addition, smaller departments may not have the resources to dedicate to the schools, thus missing an opportunity to establish better relationships with young people. Finally, an educator at one focus group complained that in his jurisdiction, police officials rotate out their SROs every 1-2 years, which prevents the officers from forming strong bonds with school administrators and students. In general, educators felt that schools are an ideal place for police and young people to start building positive relationships, and that it was important to have some consistency and continuity in SRO assignments.

One Town Hall Meeting participant pointed out that the key to building better relationships between police and young people boiled down to better communications: “I want us to change how officers talk

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 37.

to young people and children. Learn and use their names. Talk to them and get to know the community. Learn how to interact with people. I don't want to hear about another killing."

Summary of Key Findings

- **High crime rates are costly:** High rates of crime in St. Louis City and parts of St. Louis County are costing governments and individuals staggering sums of money. The total cost of Part I crime in St. Louis City and County combined—including victim, criminal justice, and community costs—was estimated to exceed \$1.5 billion in 2013.
- **Policing is extremely fragmented:** St. Louis County contains a patchwork of police departments, many of which have jurisdiction over very small areas. About one-third of the municipalities in the County that have a police department occupy less than one square mile. This has led to confusion and distrust among residents, who often feel targeted and harassed by police officers and the municipal court system.
- **Fragmentation undermines effective policing:** The fragmentation of policing is also inefficient, undermines police operations, and makes it difficult to form effective law enforcement partnerships to combat crime locally and regionally.
- **Many police departments have inappropriate goals:** In many municipalities, policing priorities are driven not by the public safety needs of the community, but rather by the goal of generating large portions of the operating revenue for the local government. This is a grossly inappropriate mission for the police, often carried out at the direction of local elected officials.
- **Community policing is lacking in many cities where it is needed most:** Even though residents consistently say they want their police departments to engage in more community-oriented policing, this approach is de-emphasized or non-existent in many jurisdictions, especially in communities with high levels of crime and deep distrust between residents and police.
- **The “muni shuffle” is unprofessional:** Police standards, training, pay, and professionalism vary dramatically throughout the region. Of particular concern is the so-called “muni shuffle,” in which police officers who are fired or allowed to resign because of disciplinary or performance issues in one department are quickly hired by another department, because it can be less expensive to hire an experienced (albeit compromised) officer than to recruit and train a new officer.
- **Concerns about race permeate the justice system:** Race is an issue that permeates almost every aspect of policing and justice in St. Louis City and County. Concerns over racial tensions and racial bias were raised throughout the course of this study, especially by African-Americans and young people. The failure to address the racial issues in policing is holding back progress.

All of these issues together are undermining the quality of policing services and harming the reputation of St. Louis City and County. The future safety, economic health, and vitality of the region will require not only addressing the immediate problems today, but also creating new approaches and better systems that are recognized as national “best practices.” As a participant at one of our Town Hall Meetings put it, “A system that’s broken isn’t going to fix itself.”

Recommendations

Greater Collaboration and Regional Standards of Excellence

As noted throughout this report, crime does not stop at a municipal or county border, and the impact of crime permeates the entire St. Louis City and County region. Policing must be viewed as a regional issue. Local governments must work toward collaborative solutions that address crime and violence, maximize partnerships and resources, and set standards that will provide consistent and professional policing services to all residents of the City, County, and local municipalities.

Recommendation #1:

Create a regional police training center and conduct joint City-County training exercises.

Throughout our study, we heard that to be effective, police officers need additional training, and new and different types of training that can address the unique needs of police agencies in St. Louis City and County. We also heard that training needs to be more consistent from agency to agency. (See Finding #7 for discussion of training issues.)

To address these needs, we recommend that St. Louis City and County combine their resources to create a single state-of-the-art police training center that would offer basic, in-service, and advanced training for all police officers in the City and County. A combined academy would provide an advanced and forward-looking approach to training and education, tailored to the needs of police officers throughout St. Louis City and County. And on issues such as coordinated responses to major events such as mass demonstrations, de-escalation strategies and reducing use of force, and community engagement, a state of the art training facility could help set standard practices for the entire St. Louis City/County region.

This facility could combine “the best and the brightest” trainers from both agencies, and could solicit the involvement of private-sector leaders in areas such as human resources, use of technology, budgeting, and use of social media.

As noted earlier, Missouri law sets minimum basic training requirements to become a certified police officer in the state and minimum continuing education requirements to maintain certification. Currently, both the St. Louis City Police Academy and the St. Louis County and Municipal Police Academy exceed the minimum requirements for basic training, and both academies have extensive continuing education offerings as well. Both academies also make extensive use of simulations, scenarios, and role playing as

part of their instructional approach. Their similar philosophies to training and education suggest that merging the two academies would be easier than if they had dramatically different approaches.

The City's Police Academy was built in 1925; the County facility, in 1989. Designing and building a new facility from the ground up would create opportunities to better integrate critical training topics and take greater advantage of new training approaches and technologies.

For example, a unified academy could offer standardized training and state-of-the-art simulations on such important topics as critical incident response, police use of force, de-escalation strategies, and unconscious bias and fair and impartial policing. Training in firearms, defensive tactics, and driving skills should focus on both skills development and decision-making.

A combined academy could also explore options for continuing education studies that would expand the use of online and distance-learning opportunities. This will be critically important for implementing the enhanced continuing education requirements contained in Recommendation #2 (see below). The creation of a unified academy would help ensure that all officers in St. Louis City and County receive the same high-quality training, and the academy would provide the flexibility to focus on emerging issues of importance to the region's law enforcement community.

Policing is not a static profession; new issues are constantly emerging, such as the technical, legal, and civil rights aspects of many new technologies in policing, from body-worn cameras and automated license plate readers to biometric devices and cell phone tracking equipment. Police professionals nationwide also are evaluating new strategies for de-escalating encounters and minimizing use of force in light of the many controversial incidents that have made headlines over the last year. A combined academy would provide a way of addressing these emerging issues in an organized way and producing state-of-the-art training that would benefit police agencies across St. Louis County and City. A combined academy also would provide a forum for designing and conducting joint City-County training exercises on issues that require inter-agency cooperation, as well as advanced educational opportunities for current and future department leaders.

Investing in a new facility would yield significant returns by enhancing the training and professionalism of all police officers within the City and County of St. Louis, which in turn would advance both community and officer safety.

Recommendation #2:

Establish a set of regional standards covering critical policies, practices, and operations that will enhance quality and professionalism.

We recommend reforms in the following areas:

Hiring standards. All officers hired by a municipal or County police department should undergo a full psychological screening by a County-approved psychiatrist or psychologist. New hires should also receive a full background investigation that includes a check of police records; education, employment, and military history; credit history, and driving records. In addition, departments should use a polygraph (or other comparable test) to detect deception. Finally, all police departments should contact the Missouri POST (Peace Officers Standards and Training) program to review the license status and any known disciplinary history of potential hires before making an offer of employment.

Training standards. The current state requirement of 48 hours of continuing education over a three-year reporting period is insufficient to maintain and enhance the skills needed for policing excellence. Instead, officers in St. Louis City and County should be required to complete a minimum of 40 hours of in-service training each year. This training should cover emerging issues and be tailored to the unique needs of police officers in the City and County. By using new technologies, including online and remote learning, this expanded continuing education requirement could be met without large cost increases to departments that now expend overtime to send officers to courses or to backfill positions while officers are at training. Consideration might be given to establishing a pool of highly trained officers who could be temporarily assigned to some departments while an officer was away at training, thus maintaining minimum staffing levels.

Use-of-force policies. Departments should re-engineer their use of force training and adopt model use-of-force policies that include the following elements: emphasize de-escalation of force whenever possible; prohibit officers from firing at moving vehicles when the vehicle itself is the only “weapon” being used; require officers to intervene if they witness another officer using excessive force; require that all use-of-force incidents be recorded on a standard form that will support data collection and analysis; and require thorough investigation of all officer-involved shootings, whether or not the subject was hit, seriously injured, or died as a result.

Code of conduct. Departments should adopt a standardized code of conduct for sworn police personnel. Furthermore, departments should have a detailed policy prohibiting biased policing.

Compliance and accreditation. Compliance standards should be created and police departments held accountable for meeting these standards, either at the state or regional level. In addition, all police agencies in St. Louis City and County should pursue national accreditation based on the adoption of this consistent set of standards and guidelines.

Recommendation #3:

Create a multi-agency Compstat program to identify and analyze cross-border crime problems, and a regional Major Case Squad to combat these problems.

As in other major metropolitan areas, crime in St. Louis City and St. Louis County is a regional issue. Criminal offenders cross boundaries, and crime prevention and crime investigation are complicated in areas that are subdivided into dozens of small, autonomous jurisdictions.

A regional Compstat program would help the police agencies in St. Louis City and County to work together in a proactive way to address these issues of fragmented responses to crime. Compstat is a data-driven performance management system that is used by police departments to reduce crime and achieve other public safety goals. Pioneered by the New York City Police Department in the mid-1990s, Compstat emphasizes information-sharing, responsibility and accountability, and improving effectiveness.⁴⁷ Today, individual police departments across the country are using Compstat to combat crime and improve policing services. Compstat systems are inclusive in nature; participants in Compstat meetings may include police officials from various ranks and different departments, as well as federal law enforcement officials, prosecutors, and any others who can contribute information or ideas for identifying crime problems and devising solutions. Many police agencies' Compstat initiatives are regional, with participants from multiple agencies focusing on cross-jurisdictional investigation and prevention efforts.⁴⁸

Establishing a regional, St. Louis City-County Compstat would allow City, County, and municipal departments, as well as state and federal law enforcement agencies, to work collaboratively to combat crime and improve effectiveness. Crime analysts would share data in order to detect cross-jurisdictional crime patterns, including data on crime "hot spots" and serious repeat offenders, and to develop collaborative solutions. Compstat meetings would also provide a feedback loop for officials in the region to evaluate progress and identify future resource needs. Finally, Compstat would serve to facilitate much-needed communication and regional partnerships among the myriad police departments in St. Louis City and County.

Regional Major Case Squad: As a natural extension of the Compstat process, we also recommend creation of a regional Major Case Squad to address the crime patterns and repeat offenders uncovered through Compstat. The Major Case Squad would include investigators from multiple jurisdictions. In addition to providing new resources to combat cross-jurisdictional crime, the proposed Major Case Squad would also promote partnerships at the operational level and advance the skills of the officers assigned to it.

⁴⁷ For background on Compstat, see "Compstat: Its Origins, Evolution, and Future in Law Enforcement," Bureau of Justice Assistance and Police Executive Research Forum.

http://www.policeforum.org/assets/docs/Free_Online_Documents/Compstat/compstat%20-%20its%20origins%20evolution%20and%20future%20in%20law%20enforcement%20agencies%202013.pdf.

⁴⁸ Scinto, Rick. "New Haven Police Launch Regional Law Enforcement Sharing." New Haven Register. N.p., 4 Nov. 2013. <http://www.nhregister.com/general-news/20131104/new-haven-police-launch-regional-law-enforcement-sharing>; Corpus Christi Police Department Twitter <https://twitter.com/corpuschristipd/status/487347834354561024>.

Recommendation #4:**Provide for cross-deputizing St. Louis City and County police officers, to enhance flexibility and effectiveness in fighting crime.**

Currently, officers in the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department and the St. Louis County Police Department have authority to make arrests in either jurisdiction, but only for violations of *state law*. City police officers cannot cite or make arrests under County ordinances, and County officers cannot enforce St. Louis City ordinances. This restriction can reduce police effectiveness in combating lower-level crime that would typically be handled at the municipal court level.

For example, if a St. Louis County Police officer working off-duty at Busch Stadium or assigned to the Metro Link Train witnesses a fight, that officer can make arrests only for violations of state law. Typically, low-level offenses such as brawling are considered municipal ordinance violations and would be better handled in municipal court. In this example, a citation for a municipal ordinance violation would not be permitted, and the case would be taken to the already overburdened state courts system.

Under this recommendation, St. Louis Metropolitan Police officers and St. Louis County officers would be formally cross-deputized, thus permitting them to arrest or cite someone for an ordinance violation in both jurisdictions. Both City and County leaders have expressed interest in cross-deputizing their officers. They should follow through by developing a formal Memorandum of Agreement that spells out the deputization arrangement and stipulates any limitations, and provides for training of officers on any significant differences in each jurisdiction's ordinances.

Recommendation #5:**Reduce the number of dispatch centers in the County to reduce confusion among residents and promote efficiency.**

As noted earlier in this report (see Finding #6), the current emergency dispatch system in St. Louis County is fragmented, inefficient, and at times causes confusion among residents. Right now, there are approximately 20 separate public safety answering points (PSAPs) in St. Louis City and County. Two-thirds of these serve only one community. Therefore, we are recommending that the number of dispatch centers could be reduced through consolidation or contracting of services.

Some of these consolidations would be a natural outgrowth of our three proposed "consolidation clusters" for various police departments in St. Louis County (see Recommendations #10-#12, below). For example, since Ferguson would contract with the County Police Department under our recommendation, dispatch services for Ferguson and three other departments—Flordell Hills, Country Club Hills, and Calverton Park—would shift to the County Police PSAP. The Berkeley dispatch center

would also fall under the County PSAP under our recommendations. We also recommend any agencies contracting with University City could become a part of that city's PSAP; those agencies currently contract with either the County or St. Ann.

In addition, there are existing clusters of independent PSAPs which may good candidates for consolidation or contracting. For example, there are five PSAPs in close enough proximity (Des Peres, Kirkwood, Glendale, Crestwood, and Sunset Hills) that there may be clear potential for increased efficiency by pooling dispatch resources. Another cluster of bordering PSAPs occurs in Hazelwood, Bridgeton, St. Ann, and Maryland Heights. Given that St. Ann already serves as a small hub for dispatch services, their PSAP may be a viable option for contracting within this cluster. Additionally, both Ladue and Overland border the three departments making up the West Central Dispatch Center.

By implementing the three proposed agency consolidation clusters, as well as the potential groupings of geographic clusters, the number of PSAPs in St. Louis City and County could potentially be reduced by 60%, from 20 PSAPs to 8. This would create opportunities to improve efficiency and service.

Strengthening State Monitoring and Oversight

The state of Missouri plays an important role in promoting and ensuring the quality and professionalism of policing in St. Louis City and County. However, our study found that critical state programs are not as effective as they could, largely because they are seriously underfunded.

Recommendation #6:

Provide additional resources to support the Peace Officers Standards and Training (POST) program in its monitoring and oversight roles.

The POST program is critically important to ensuring the integrity and quality of licensed police professionals in the state of Missouri and holding local agencies accountable for meeting state standards. Given widespread concerns over police hiring practices in some communities in St. Louis County—the so-called “muni shuffle”—it is essential that the POST program be adequately funded and staffed to carry out its monitoring, oversight, and investigative roles. This includes not only documenting police officer hires and separations and investigating disciplinary issues, but also monitoring continuing education requirements for licensed police officers in the state.

As documented in the 2005 Missouri State Auditor report, the Missouri POST program has lacked adequate resources for at least a decade. The Missouri legislature should appropriate the necessary funds for the POST program, and the Department of Public Safety should move quickly to restaff the program, update systems, and bolster its investigative capabilities.

Recommendation #7:

The Macks Creek law should be strengthened and enforced more vigorously.

Like other recent studies, our examination documented how police priorities and actions in many communities in St. Louis County are driven by the need to generate revenue for local governments, and not by the public safety needs of the community. To prevent “predatory policing,” the Missouri legislature passed a statute, known as the Macks Creek law,⁴⁹ that currently limits to 30% the amount of general operating revenue that municipalities can collect from municipal fines and fees.

Better Together found that while well-intentioned, the Macks Creek law has not been meaningfully enforced on a consistent basis. Using data provided by the state judiciary⁵⁰, six agencies were in violation of the law in 2013; 26 municipalities exceeded 15% of general revenue; and 40 exceeded 10%.

Given the reluctance of many elected leaders to change the mission and priorities of their municipal police departments, it is important that the state show leadership and action. As this report was being finalized, the Missouri House and Senate were considering separate bills to strengthen Macks Creek law, including significantly reducing the current 30% cap on court revenue. These efforts are worthy and important, and the bills should be reconciled and enacted into law. If the cap on court revenue is reduced to 10% or 15%, as provided by various versions of the legislation, numerous municipalities may find themselves in violation of the law in the future.

In addition, the state must ensure that the strengthened law is vigorously enforced. The state agencies responsible for enforcement must make it a priority to ensure that municipalities are reporting their information accurately and in a timely manner, and any municipalities that fail to comply with the law must be held accountable.

Improving Data Collection and Analysis

Having accurate, timely, and accessible data is critical to understanding police effectiveness, developing strategies for improvement, and evaluating success. These include data on police operations and activities, as well as community survey information.

Recommendation #8:

⁴⁹ Missouri Revised Statutes, Section 302.341.1.
<http://www.moga.mo.gov/mostatutes/stathtml/3020003411.HTML>

⁵⁰ <https://www.courts.mo.gov/file.jsp?id=68844>

Create a Central Data Warehouse about policing in St. Louis City and County that is accessible to police officials and members of the public.

Earlier in this report, we detailed a number of challenges we faced in trying to assemble and analyze critical data for this analysis (see “Data Challenges,” p. 6). These included difficulties in obtaining basic information on budgeting, staffing, and officer workload in many departments, as well as a lack of standardization on how information is collected and reported. The lack of complete, accurate, and standardized information makes it difficult to fully evaluate policing practices and measure improvements. The lack of information and transparency also undermines public confidence in policing.

Under our recommendation, a Central Data Warehouse would be created for St. Louis City and County. The data warehouse would be operated as a joint venture between the governments of the City and County, as the data availability would benefit the region as a whole. All departments would be expected to provide basic information, in a standardized format, on at least an annual basis. This could be required under Missouri’s Sunshine Law.

Among the data that would be reported and readily available for analysis would be the following:

- Police departments’ operating budgets, including salary costs, maintenance costs, costs of contracted services, and revenue from contracted services.
- Organizational information, including an organizational chart and staffing levels by rank, gender, and race/ethnicity.
- UCR crime data for Part I and Part II offenses
- UCR arrest data
- Standardized calls-for-service information, include call type, self-initiated vs. citizen-generated activity, date/time/location, and call disposition.
- Information on all officer-involved shootings.

The collection of data on police-involved shootings would give St. Louis City and County a unique opportunity to lead the way nationally on an issue of critical importance at this time. Currently, there is no reliable national database on police-involved shootings, and information at the local level is generally spotty or non-existent as well. Collecting and reporting these data would demonstrate transparency and commitment by government and citizens to understand how these incidents occur and any lessons that can be learned to reduce uses of force. Recent events across the country demonstrate the need for accurate and open information. The creation of a Central Data Warehouse containing this type of information would be a significant step in that direction.

Recommendation #9:

Survey the community on an ongoing basis to measure citizen satisfaction with policing services and to assess progress over time.

Opening lines of communications with the community and asking their opinions help to break down barriers and generate useful information about the quality of policing services. Through the proposed Central Data Warehouse, we recommend creating a police satisfaction survey that would be available to the public through an online portal. Any citizen who interacts with the police in St. Louis City and County would be able to provide feedback on the services they received and offer suggestions. A number of police agencies nationwide have implemented this type of tool. The Washington, DC government provides such a tool for grading an entire range of government agencies, including the police.⁵¹

Survey instruments are already being used in parts of St. Louis County. For example, every three years, the Normandy Police Department distributes surveys to random residences in the community, with postage-paid envelopes for remittance. (See appendix to this report.) The surveys ask about residents' perceptions of safety and levels of satisfaction with the police. Jennings officers also distribute survey cards to community members.

Our proposal takes the concept of community surveys to the next level. An online police satisfaction survey connected to the Central Data Warehouse would be more geographically widespread, and it would engage people who have recently had direct contact with the police. The collected data would provide an immediate snapshot of customer satisfaction, as well as long-term trends within individual agencies and across the region. The results could help inform future training and policy needs as well. This process would add an additional element of transparency and accountability to the Central Data Warehouse concept, and would give citizens a voice in stating their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the police.

Strategic Consolidations

Research has shown that consolidating police agencies can offer both advantages (greater consistency, the ability to offer a wider range of services, and efficiencies, to name a few) and some possible disadvantages (start-up costs of reorganizing, and potential lessening of local control over police priorities).

⁵¹ "Grade DC Government" website: <http://grade.dc.gov/>

In an ideal world, consolidating all police agencies would have advantages in terms of ending wasteful duplications of effort, establishing agency-wide standards and best practices, and producing cost savings. However, the St. Louis region is large and diverse, with different crime problems and different community needs and priorities, and many of the residents and community leaders we spoke with are quite satisfied with their police departments and work well with them. Attempting to dismantle current policing structures in these areas would be met with staunch community opposition and could serve to undermine strong and productive community policing partnerships that currently exist.

While wholesale mergers are not recommended, some targeted and strategic consolidations could improve the quality of policing in some areas. Therefore, we are recommending that three consolidation clusters be established in St. Louis County.

The communities in each cluster typically have several factors in common: relatively high crime rates, high numbers of low-level arrests and traffic citations, high ratios of officers to resident populations, high numbers of officers per square mile, and high population density. In addition, they are geographically contiguous. Under our proposal, the departments in each cluster would contract with the County Police Department or another agency for services.

It should be noted that for each cluster, there could be some reductions in the total number of officers serving the combined jurisdictions. Although it may seem counter-intuitive to reduce the number of police officers in high-crime areas of St. Louis County, we believe our plan will lead to higher-quality policing and improved crime control. Having so many small municipalities, each with its own small police agency, is costly and inefficient. Most of these departments currently have high ratios of officers to population and to land area—in many cases, well beyond the norm elsewhere in the country. Furthermore, the prime function of many of the officers in these jurisdictions is to issue traffic citations in order to raise revenue. In many cases, officers have been hired to write tickets, not to investigate crime and develop crime prevention strategies.

Under our proposals, officers in these communities would function as they do in other cities across the nation, focusing on preventing crime, investigating crimes that do occur, and working with community members to enhance neighborhood safety. Following best policing practices, this model and the accompanying recommendations will help the region to reduce crime in a more efficient manner, thus saving money by reducing the costs of crime.

Recommendation #10:

Create a consolidation cluster encompassing nine contiguous jurisdictions in the vicinity of University City: Beverly Hills, Hillsdale, Northwoods, Pagedale, Pine Lawn, Uplands Park, Velda City, Velda Village Hills, and Wellston.

These jurisdictions would be consolidated into a single police district and merged via contracts with either the St. Louis County Police Department or the highly regarded University City Police Department.

Analysis

These nine municipalities are roughly bounded by Interstate 70 to the north, the City of St. Louis to the east, University City to the south, and Normandy and Pasadena Hills to the west. They have a combined population of 18,091 and a total land area of 4.2 square miles. These municipalities combined account for 1.1% of the land area and 1.8% of the population in St. Louis County, but 3.4% of all Part I crime (based on a five-year average). Seven of the jurisdictions – Beverly Hills, Hillsdale, Northwoods, Pagedale, Pine Lawn, Velda City, and Wellston—have their own stand-alone police departments. Uplands Park contracts with St. Louis County for police services; Velda Village Hills contracts with Beverly Hills. The following table summarizes key data about the municipalities in the proposed consolidation cluster.

Size and Staffing Data: Municipalities in Proposed Cluster #1

Municipality	Population	Square Miles	Full Time Officers	Officers per 1,000 Residents	Officers per Square Mile	Population Per Square Mile
Beverly Hills	574	0.09	11*	19.2	122.2	6,378
Hillsdale	1,478	0.35	13*	8.8	37.1	4,223
Northwoods	4,227	0.71	21	5.0	29.6	5,954
Pagedale	3,304	1.19	17	5.1	14.3	2,776
Pine Lawn	3,275	0.61	11	3.4	18.0	5,369
Uplands Park	445	0.07	DATA UNAVAILABLE (UNA)	UNA	UNA	6,357
Velda City	1,420	0.16	7	4.9	43.8	8,875
Velda Village Hills	1,055	0.12	UNA	UNA	UNA	8,792
Wellston	2,313	0.93	11*	4.8	11.8	2,487
TOTAL	18,091	4.2	91	5.0	21.5	4,277
University City	35,371	5.9	66	1.9	11.2	5,995

*Officer count obtained through either departmental website or through Missouri UCR estimates.

The nine municipalities are small in both population and land area. Yet, each has a high number of police officers per population (well above the national average of 2.3 per 1,000) and officers per square

mile. The number of officers per 1,000 residents and per square mile is also much higher than in University City.

Crime and Arrest Data: Municipalities in Proposed Cluster #1

Municipality	Population	Violent Crime per 1,000 residents (5-year average)	Property Crime per 1,000 residents (5-year average)	Avg Part I Arrests per 1,000 residents (5-year average)	“Other” Arrests per 1,000 residents (5-year average)
Beverly Hills*	574	17.0	50.1	18.8	1087.8
Hillsdale	1,478	18.4	32.2	11.8	245.5
Northwoods	4,227	8.8	35.5	15.1	7.9
Pagedale	3,304	8.5	41.8	13.9	287.2
Pine Lawn	3,275	13.6	40.1	12.2	463.3
Uplands Park *	445	9.0	31.5	7.3	66.3
Velda City	1,420	12.4	28.2	9.4	177.2
Velda Village Hills	1,055	4.4	22.2	5.3	110.7
Wellston	2,313	39.8	71.8	39.3	272.4
University City	35,371	5.5	41.9	10.8	5.6

*Agencies did not report full UCR data for entire time period. Averages were adjusted based on the number of years reported.

The data suggest that in these municipalities, officers are focusing on minor offenses which can maximize revenue, rather than devoting attention to more serious crime problems. Other than in Velda Village Hills, the number of arrests for Part I crimes was substantially lower than the number of Part I offenses. However, both the number of officers and the overall arrest rates per 1,000 residents are exceptionally high, especially when compared to University City, again indicating a focus on minor offenses.

Efficiency Analysis

This proposed consolidation cluster would eliminate redundant command structures and reduce the total number of officers, thereby increasing efficiency and saving money. At the same time, officers would be freed from revenue-generating activities and be able to focus on crime control and prevention.

Currently, the nine departments in the proposed cluster have 91 officers, for a ratio of 5.0 officers per 1,000 population, or more than twice the national average. Yet, despite the high number of police officers, this cluster has five of the “top ten” highest-crime municipalities. The consolidated district could be composed of substantially fewer officers, while providing six officers constantly on duty in the

4.2 square miles of the combined jurisdiction. A ratio of 3.0 officers per 1,000 residents or less would be much more in line with national and regional averages. By reducing the total number of officers, the new consolidated police district would be able to offer higher salaries to officers, allowing the district to attract higher-quality candidates.⁵²

The new district would benefit from a centralized command and control structure, the constant presence of a field supervisor, and having several detectives dedicated to the investigation of crime. Two traffic officers could be allocated to respond to neighborhood traffic complaints, not revenue generation. In addition, the new field configuration would be supported by crime and problem analysis that would show patterns for the entire area that could be addressed by the whole district.

By eliminating the current limitations and redundancies created by the nine municipalities’ political boundaries, and by having all officers in the district centrally directed, policing will become more directed at combating the area’s crime problems, and move away from the current focus on revenue generation.

Recommendation #11:

Create a consolidation cluster encompassing four contiguous jurisdictions—Berkeley, Calverton Park, Ferguson and Kinloch—that would be consolidated into a single police district and merged via contract with the St. Louis County Police Department.

Analysis

These four municipalities have a combined population of 31,772 and a total land area of 12 square miles. They account for 2.3% of the land area and 3.2% of the population in St. Louis County, but 6.3% of all Part I crime (based on a five-year average). Each of the four municipalities operates a separate stand-alone police department. The following table summarizes key data about the municipalities in the proposed consolidation cluster.

Size and Staffing Data: Municipalities in Proposed Cluster #2

Municipality	Population	Square Miles	Full Time Officers	Officers per 1,000 Residents	Officers per Square Mile	Population Per Square Mile
Berkeley	8,978	4.97	31	3.5	6.2	1,806

⁵² Officer salary information from agencies in the proposed district that did not provide salary data is excluded from the estimate.

Calverton Park	1,293	0.41	6	4.6	14.6	3,154
Ferguson	21,203	6.19	55	2.6	8.9	3,425
Kinloch	298	0.73	4*	13.4	5.5	408
Total	31,772	12	96	3.0	7.8	2,583

*Officer count obtained through either departmental website or through Missouri UCR estimates.

The municipalities vary in population size and in land area. However, some of their police departments have high numbers of officers per 1,000 residents. This is especially true in Kinloch, with 13.4 officers per 1,000 residents; the national average is approximately 2.3 per 1,000. In terms of officers per square mile, the four municipalities are generally higher than the regional average.

Crime and Arrest Data: Municipalities in Proposed Cluster #2

Municipality	Population	Violent Crime per 1,000 residents (5-year average)	Property Crime per 1,000 residents (5-year average)	Avg Part I Arrests per 1,000 residents (5-year average)	“Other” Arrests per 1,000 residents (5-year average)
Berkeley	8,978	17.5	51.3	11.0	55.4
Calverton Park	1,293	2.6	13.6	3.9	191.8
Ferguson	21,203	4.7	50.2	17.6	16.7
Kinloch	298	28.9	50.3	15.4	77.2

As with the municipalities in the proposed consolidation cluster #1, the crime and arrest data here suggest that officers in these four municipalities are focusing on minor offenses which can maximize revenue, rather than devoting attention to more serious crime problems. This is especially true in Berkeley and Kinloch, which have relatively high rates of violent crime. Calverton Park, on the other hand, has a high “other” arrest rate but a relatively low Part I crime rate.

Efficiency Analysis

Combined, the four departments in the proposed cluster currently have 96 officers, for a ratio of 3.0 officers per 1,000 population. The proposed consolidated district could reduce the number of officers slightly, allowing an increase in the salaries of officers in the new consolidated district, helping the district to attract higher-quality and possibly more diverse candidates.

This proposed new district would also allocate resources more effectively to target neighborhood crime problems and build partnerships with the community. For example, the proposed district could have 10 officers and one sergeant in the field around the clock. In addition, it could have a special unit of 6 officers and 1 sergeant dedicated to addressing specific crime problems, and four detectives for follow-up investigations. Central command and control would enhance coordination and leadership within the

district, and centralized crime and problem analysis would focus on patterns that could be addressed by the whole district.

Recommendation #12:

Merge five contiguous municipalities—Bellefontaine Neighbors, Country Club Hills, Flordell Hills, Moline Acres, and Riverview—via contracts into the Jennings Precinct of the St. Louis County Police Department.

Analysis

These five municipalities have a combined population of 18,254 and a total area of 6 square miles. Each currently has its own stand-alone police department, ranging from 5 officers in Flordell Hills to 31 in Bellefontaine Neighbors. The consolidated precinct with Jennings would have a population of 33,010 located in 10 square miles. Together, this new district would account for 2% of the land area and 3.3% of the population in St. Louis County, but 6.8% of all Part I crime (based on a five-year average).

Size and Staffing Data: Municipalities in Proposed Cluster #3

Municipality	Population	Square Miles	Full Time Officers	Officers per 1,000 Residents	Officers per Square Mile	Population Per Square Mile
Bellefontaine Neighbors	10,860	4.32	31	2.9	7.2	2,514
Country Club Hills	1,274	0.18	12*	9.4	66.7	7,078
Flordell Hills	822	0.11	5	6.1	45.5	7,473
Moline Acres	2,442	0.57	12	4.9	21.1	4,284
Riverview	2,856	0.83	12	4.2	14.5	3,441
Jennings	14,756	3.7	33*	2.2	8.9	3,988
Total	33,010	10	106	3.2	10.9	3,400

*Officer count obtained through either departmental website or through Missouri UCR estimates.

The municipalities’ populations and land areas are generally small—four of the agencies patrol areas that are less than one square mile. Yet their police departments are relatively large, both in terms of officers per 1,000 residents and in officers per square miles. In fact, the current Jennings Precinct is the only jurisdiction in the proposed cluster that has a ratio of officers per 1,000 residents that is lower than the national average of 2.3.

Crime and Arrest Data: Municipalities in Proposed Cluster #3

Municipality	Population	Violent Crime per 1,000 residents (5-year average)	Property Crime per 1,000 residents (5-year average)	Avg Part I Arrests per 1,000 residents (5-year average)	“Other” Arrests per 1,000 residents (5-year average)
Bellefontaine Neighbors	10,860	4.9	35.8	7.2	65.6
Country Club Hills	1,274	5.8	41.1	14.9	151.3
Flordell Hills	822	8.5	48.7	8.8	103.9
Moline Acres	2,442	7.9	50.1	22.4	251.1
Riverview	2,856	10.3	59.2	8.6	11.2
Jennings	14,756	12.6	62.5	26.0	86.2

Although the rates of violent crime in these jurisdictions are relatively low, the overall arrest rates are high. Again, this indicates that a disproportionate number of arrests are being made for relatively minor offenses. Creating a consolidated precinct in the area could enhance community safety by allowing officers to focus more attention on neighborhood crime problems.

Efficiency Analysis

Combined, the departments in the proposed cluster currently have 106 officers, for a ratio of 3.2 officers per 1,000 population. The proposed consolidated precinct could reduce that number slightly, to achieve a ratio of approximately 2.7 officers per 1,000. Again, this would allow increases in salaries, to help the district recruit and retain more highly qualified officers.

The newly consolidated precinct could have 11 officers and a sergeant on patrol around the clock. This would give them time and responsibility to respond to citizen requests for service and to engage residents in more proactive community policing efforts. This consolidated precinct would also have a special unit of six officers and a sergeant focused on crime control, plus four detectives and two traffic officers.

As with the other proposed consolidation clusters, creating a single consolidated precinct in this area would improve policing services. Through centralized command and control and crime and problem analysis, officers would be able to focus on the most serious crime problems of the area, without concern for local political boundaries. Opportunities to engage with the community would also be enhanced.

Recommendation #13:

Non-cluster agencies should implement the recommendations in this report and consider changes to meet community expectations, the Macks Creek Law, and national best practices in policing.

While we recommend three strategic clusters in Recommendations 10-12, problematic departments in St. Louis County are not limited to the areas that would be affected by those recommendations. Numerous municipal police agencies have serious problems that are not included in the cluster models. One area of particular concern is to the west of Lambert International Airport. While this sector does not face the serious crime problems or degree of inefficient staffing seen within our three clusters, policing problems are evident. Agencies in St. Ann, Charlack, Edmundson, Bel-Ridge, St. John, and Sycamore Hills are among the top 20 municipalities receiving a percentage of revenue from municipal court fines and fees in 2013. All exceed 22%, which means all would be in violation of either proposed revision to the Macks Creek Law.

Departments in this area have also been criticized for poor evidence collection and handling, questionable jailing practices, and the potential misuse of reserve officers. PERF is concerned that should either of the proposed updates to the current Macks Creek law be enacted, these agencies will no longer be stable. **In addition to implementing the county-wide recommendations listed earlier in this report, strong consideration should be given to a collective review of how these agencies will change their operating procedures to be more in line with community expectations, the Macks Creek law, and nationally accepted best practices in policing.** These agencies should consider efforts, including consolidation, to strengthen the delivery of police services to the 50,000 residents who live near the airport. If these agencies do not implement reforms recommended in this report, they are at risk for facing the same issues of high crime rates that most of the municipalities in the clusters are facing.

Recommendation #14:

Focus on breaking down walls and building bridges between the police and communities in the St. Louis region.

Police, with support from elected officials, must take significant steps to build trust and restore relationships with the communities that they serve. This is especially important in the communities that historically have had a contentious relationship with the police. Police officials must embrace and commit to this new way of policing as a partnership with the community.

The community needs to expect to see changes in how their communities are being policed, and must be willing to take steps to collaborate with police and seize every opportunity to heal these wounds.

Each positive interaction and partnership takes the region one step closer to the fair, transparent, unbiased and civil policing that are desired by community members and police officials in the St. Louis area.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to identify best systems for policing across the entire St. Louis City and St. Louis County area, and we studied the entire region. But inevitably we were drawn to the parts of the region that have the highest rates of serious crime, the highest costs of crime, and the most serious disconnects between high crime rates and police priorities.

PERF's study confirmed many of the concerns that have been raised over the past year, including a police and court system in some communities that is fragmented and driven by generating revenue, as opposed to the legitimate, proper role of policing: working with communities to identify problems of crime and disorder, and implementing solutions that prevent crime and respond effectively to crimes that are committed.

Our study revealed a complex policing and justice environment that cannot be "fixed" by any one measure, such as consolidating all of the police agencies in the City and County. Our report recommends targeted and strategic consolidations of three clusters of police departments in St. Louis County, as well as broader, region-wide reforms to improve the quality of policing throughout the City and County.

The challenges ahead are daunting. The region as a whole has significant levels of serious and violent crime, and St. Louis City and a number of municipalities in St. Louis County have very high crime rates. The costs of crime in St. Louis City and County are high—in terms of personal hardship for victims as well as financial costs. It is estimated that crime cost each resident of St. Louis City and County \$1,187 per year in 2013, for a total exceeding \$1.5 billion a year.

The overall response to crime by police is hindered by a number of factors:

- **Fragmentation:** The fragmentation of policing among 60 separate police agencies, many of which are extremely small, causes inefficiencies and uneven delivery of police services to area residents. Small police departments are found in other parts of the United States, and those departments work together in many cases. But the fragmentation in the St. Louis region is extreme. As St. Louis County Police Chief Jon Belmar told us, "It is not realistic for my agency to have close relationships with five dozen different departments."
- **Weaknesses in policies, training, hiring, and pay levels:** The lack of standards and commonality in policies, training, hiring, and pay levels weakens the professionalism and quality of individual agencies, and undermines public confidence in the police in general.

- **Inappropriate goals:** An inappropriate and misguided mission has been thrust upon the police in many communities: the need to generate large sums of revenue for their city governments. The 90 municipalities in St. Louis County account for 11% of Missouri’s population, but bring in more than one-third of all municipal fines and fees. This is not the way that policing is done in the United States. PERF has never before encountered what we have seen in parts of St. Louis County. The role of police is to protect the public and to work with local communities to solve problems of crime and disorder—not to harass residents with absurd systems of fines and penalties, mostly for extremely minor offenses.
- **Racial bias:** Issues of race and racial bias lie at the heart of many of these problems. As revealed in both the statistical data we analyzed and the hundreds of people we spoke with in Town Hall Meetings, focus groups, and one-on-one interviews, it is predominantly African Americans who are getting caught up in these unfair, improper revenue-driven practices.

These and other issues documented in this report are driving a wedge between police and residents in many communities. They are undermining the legitimacy of the police in the eyes of many residents, community leaders, business leaders, and the news media. And they are preventing the police and residents from working together and cooperatively to prevent crime and respond effectively when residents are victimized by crime.

We also heard that the type of policing being conducted in some parts of the St. Louis region is not what officers want to be doing. Young men and women become police officers because they want to serve their communities and protect them, not because they want to harass the people they are charged with serving. In many communities, good police officers are caught up in a bad system.

Finally, this system is causing severe damage to the reputation of the entire St. Louis region. The failures of the justice system are making it less likely that people nationwide will see the St. Louis area as a healthy, vital, happy place to work and live.

Despite these challenges—and there are many—there is a positive, hopeful way of looking at this situation.

St. Louis City and County have endured a continuing crisis of confidence for almost a year now. As difficult and challenging as this year has been, the crisis provides an opportunity to come together and galvanize the will to make reforms.

Most people now understand that the status quo is not an option if St. Louis is to heal the wounds that have been opened and to move forward in a positive direction. Most of the people we

encountered during this project were frustrated and concerned, and in some cases, angry. But most were not despairing; they had hope for the future. The leaders of St. Louis City and County should share in their hope and seize this opportunity to fix the problems, and make the region’s policing and justice system a national model for reform.

Out of the terrible situation that exists in many parts of the St. Louis region, an opportunity exists to create a new, more integrated, regional approach to policing that is modeled on best policies, best practices, and best training and development of officers. Not all of the police agencies in the City and County need to be combined, but there is a great need for police departments to share information, to work together, and to stop functioning as separate agencies unto themselves.

There is also a need and opportunity for private-sector leaders to become more engaged. Business and community leaders have everything at stake in the future of the St. Louis region, so police leaders should think about how they can tap into private-sector assistance, resources, and expertise in such areas as new technologies, human resources, and budgeting. Private-sector leaders may be able to serve as adjunct “professors” in policing training programs or as “executives on loan” who temporarily work in police agencies.

The future of policing in St. Louis City and County is not just about the police; it is also about the community. Police leaders and community leaders must work together on devising reforms.

More specifically, on issues of officer recruitment and training, policies and standards, cross-deputization and cooperation among neighboring departments, consolidated approaches to certain functions, development of regional Compstat systems and joint investigations to fight cross-border crime, centralized data systems that facilitate accountability and transparency, and efforts to rebuild trust and partnerships with community members, the police departments in St. Louis City and County have opportunities to step up to a higher level of professionalism.

The Police Executive Research Forum believes that the recommendations in this report will help to build a new model of justice for the region. Police agencies in St. Louis City and County should aim higher than merely responding to the current crisis. They should aim for developing an unprecedented new state-of-the-art approach to regional policing, in which all agencies work together and work with their communities to address the crime problems and quality of life issues that really matter to the people who live in St. Louis City and St. Louis County.

Appendix: Normandy Police Department 2015 Community Survey

1. Have you or any member of your household called or had contact with the Normandy Police Department for service or assistance within the last year? Yes No

2. Please rate the Normandy Police Department in the following areas:

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Ability to handle/resolve serious situations				
Speed of response when called				
Professional competence/knowledge				
Protection of the community				
Police Visibility				
Neighborhood Patrols				
Fair and Equal Treatment				
Officer Appearance/Demeanor				
Case follow up in needed				
Accuracy of Report				
Overall image of the Normandy Police Department				

3. How satisfied are you with the service provided to you by the Normandy Police Department?

Very Satisfied Satisfied Unsatisfied Very Unsatisfied

In regards to your answer why did you answer the way you did?

4. How safe do you feel in your particular community?

Walking in your neighborhood during the day?

Very Safe Safe Unsafe Very Unsafe

Walking in your neighborhood at night?

Very Safe Safe Unsafe Very Unsafe

In your home during the day?

Very Safe Safe Unsafe Very Unsafe

In your home at night?

Very Safe Safe Unsafe Very Unsafe

Generally, in parts of the city away from your own neighborhood?

Very Safe Safe Unsafe Very Unsafe

In any of the parks in your city?

Very Safe Safe Unsafe Very Unsafe

In regards to your answers, why did you answer the way you did?

5. The Normandy Police Department's highest priorities are to respond immediately to emergency situations such as crimes against persons, in-progress property crimes and abuse/neglect of children or elderly. The department also endeavors to pro-actively respond to "neighbor nuisance" issues. Using each number only once, please rank the following services in order of importance to you and your family, with 1 being the highest priority and 5 being the lowest priority.

- Address nuisance complaints, such as loud music or barking dogs.
- Investigate suspicious people and/or suspicious vehicles.
- Ticket and/or remove derelict vehicles, ticket properties out of code compliance.
- Investigate open doors and windows on home and businesses.
- Strictly enforce traffic regulations, such as speeding or stop sign violations.

6. What is your belief or perception about the current crime trend in the City of Normandy over the last two years?

- Crime has increased in Normandy over the last two years.
- Crime has remained the same in Normandy over the last two years.
- Crime has decreased in Normandy over the past two years?
- Do not know.

7. In your opinion, compared to surrounding communities how safe is Normandy?

Much safer Somewhat safer The same Somewhat less Much less safe

8. Are you aware that Normandy provides contractual police services to other communities?
 Yes No

9. Do you know anyone that lives in another community you think would benefit from having the Normandy Police Department provide service to them?
 Yes No

10. Would you feel comfortable recommending the Normandy Police Department to them?
 Yes No

Why or why not?

11. Are you aware that the Normandy Police Department is a State Accredited police department?
 Yes No

12. Do you agree or disagree that being recognized as an Accredited police department is a benefit to the community?
 Highly agree Agree Doesn't matter Disagree Highly Disagree

13. The traits, habits, programs or policies I like most about the Normandy Police are:

14. The three most important concerns I have with or about the Normandy Police are?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

15. Are you aware that the Normandy Police have a website, a Facebook page and a Twitter account and welcome visits and comments from the communities we serve and any visitors?

Yes No

16. **The next section is also entirely voluntary and strictly confidential. It will not be publicly displayed and will only be available to select police personnel and only with the express permission of the Chief of Police. We greatly value your privacy and understand if you would wish to remain anonymous. However, we want to have every opportunity to hear your input which is also very valuable to us.**

Would you like for us to re-contact you about your experiences with the Normandy Police Department so that we may discuss any comments, concerns, ideas, etc.?

Accept Decline

Name:

Address:

Phone:

Email:

Thank you for your and cooperation in completing this survey. It helps us to determine what we are doing properly and what areas we need to improve on. Please enclose the completed survey in the self-addressed stamped envelope and place it in your mailbox or you may deliver it to the Normandy City Hall.