



City of Cambridge Police Department

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Dr. Branville G. Bard, Jr.
Police Commissioner

Louis A. DePasquale
City Manager

To: City Manager, Louis A. DePasquale
From: Police Commissioner, Branville G. Bard, Jr.
Date: September 2018
Ref.: **Awaiting Report #0-4, dated June 18, 2018**

Dear Sir:

The purpose of this response is to address Awaiting Report #0-4, dated June 18, 2018, whereby it was requested to appoint an internal Cambridge Police Department Task Force focused on the creation and implementation of a Peace and Safety plan for The Port and Wellington-Harrington neighborhoods; and be it further that the City Manager be and hereby is requested to direct the Police Commissioner to establish an aggressive and community oriented new strategy to reduce the violence in The Port and Wellington-Harrington neighborhoods, to utilize the framework of the continuing Safe Streets, Safe City stakeholder meeting group to assist with envisioning, executing, and promoting this plan.

The Cambridge Police Department has conducted the following activity in response to this order:

Summary: On Tuesday, June 19, CPD formed a task force of more than a dozen officers to prevent firearm violence in The Port and surrounding neighborhoods. In the eleven weeks prior, there were 9 gunshot incidents in The Port and Wellington-Harrington neighborhoods. In the eleven weeks the Task Force was in operation, there were only 2 incidents.

Gunshot incidents in The Port and Wellington-Harrington neighborhoods

11-week period prior to Task Force <i>3/31/2018 – 6/16/2018</i>	11-week period during Task Force <i>6/19/2018 – 9/1/2018</i>
9 gunshot incidents 1 gunshot incident every 8 ½ days	2 gunshot incidents 1 gunshot incident every 37 days

Details: Less than 24 hours after the Council Order, CPD reassigned 11 police officers and detectives, 2 sergeants, and 1 lieutenant to work exclusively on the Violence Prevention Task Force. Two Deputy Superintendents provided oversight and a variety of other personnel provided additional support. The Task Force worked seven days a week from 4:00 PM – 2:00 AM (at minimum) through Saturday,

September 1. Though officers are no longer assigned exclusively to The Task Force, their work, and the Department's commitment to preventing gun violence in The Port and surrounding neighborhoods is ongoing. The Department will continue to follow-up on the work and activity of The Task Force. This will include, but is not limited to, the strategies outlined later in this document in the *Cambridge Police Department-Wide Strategies* section.

In addition to identifying and holding individuals accountable for their role(s) in perpetuating gun violence in the neighborhood, The Task Force was instructed to focus on conducting positive outreach with area residents.

The Task Force Positive Outreach & Collaboration Activity

- Participated in the Pentecostal Tabernacle "PT in the Park" event on June 21.
- Met with local chaplains for a dinner meeting to discuss violence in The Port on June 28.
- Participated in two neighborhood peace walks; one on July 11 and one on August 15.
- Identified and recruited candidates for the fall Cambridge Works class.
- Regularly met and collaborated with The Port street worker.
- Collaborated with clergy, sought feedback from community members, and worked with staff running several basketball programs.
- Routinely initiated conversation with individuals known to be involved in violence and crime in The Port and surrounding neighborhoods to develop rapport and encourage them to cease harmful behavior and connect with city and social service resources.
- Conducted jail visits of known offenders prior to release to offer assistance and resources and help with their transition from incarceration back to our community in Cambridge.
- Collaborated with property management companies to address quality of life complaints.

The Task Force Enforcement Activity & Results

The Task Force had a very clear mandate to prioritize outreach and prevention and to use enforcement judiciously and narrowly to hold serious and repeat offenders accountable. Officers consistently used their discretion wisely and displayed extraordinary restraint before resorting to enforcement. Further, officers recognized that arrest is not an end in and of itself. The arrest of a person can disrupt their cycle of criminal and harmful behavior providing an important intervention opportunity. Officers regularly appeared at court hearings and met with those they arrested to offer assistance.

Following are some of the enforcement activities and statistics and results of the Task Force efforts:

- Issued more than 200 verbal and written warnings for various illegal behavior, most notably:
 - 78 warnings for drug use or possession;
 - 80 warnings for late-night trespassing in City parks and Cambridge Housing property.

- Made 46 arrests:
 - about half (22) of which were for outstanding arrest warrants and non-discretionary.
 - the remaining 24 arrests represent less than 8% of the more than 300 documented encounters with individuals engaged in unlawful behavior.
- Recovered one firearm and arrested an individual for illegal firearm possession following a report of gunshots.
- Collaborated with law enforcement partners including the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) and the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) to initiate proactive investigations targeting gun violence.
- Intelligence revealed that the work of Task Force officers caused significant disruption to drug markets (predominantly marijuana) in The Port.
- Feedback from countless residents was overwhelmingly positive. Police were repeatedly told that increased police presence and enforcement was welcomed.

Cambridge Police Department-Wide Strategies

Outside of the formation of The Task Force, the Department increased its outreach and impact throughout the summer via numerous strategies, a few of which are highlighted here.

Engagement

- Continued participation in the *Safe Streets, Safe City* stakeholder meeting. Police command staff and other Department representatives attended the last meeting on June 13 and will continue to work closely with this group.
- Strategizing with the Community Crisis Response Network (CCRN) to take a proactive involvement approach that includes cooperation with the community and community response partners.
- Participating and leading in Cambridge Summer Youth and Community Center Programs, which offer diverse, high quality programs that promote leadership and youth development through enrichment activities, unique experiences, and opportunities to develop relationships with adults and peers. Programs include Boys and Girls Empowerment Camp, Boys to Men, Hip Hop Transformation, City Peace Building Bridges, Mission Possible: Solve It, My City, My Voice, Cambridge Boxing Program, and much more.
- Collaborating with the faith-based community and participating in peace walks and community BBQs, such as the Pentecostal Tabernacle’s “PT in the Park” music and food event at Clement Morgan Park.
- Deploying Commanding Officers to The Port neighborhood for a portion of their daily shifts.

- Participating and/or organizing several summer basketball leagues taking place weekdays all summer long Monday-Friday throughout the City, including at Sennott Park on Monday and Wednesday evenings and at Clement Morgan Park and the Community Arts Center Friday and Saturday evenings.
- Attending the City's "Screen on the Green" events in June, July and August.

Prevention and Diversion

- Utilizing programs such as the Department's Focused Deterrence initiative and Safety Net Collaborative to prevent the same vicious cycle of someone consistently harming themselves and/or others. CPD will evaluate alternatives to arrest by connecting individuals with relevant resources and treatment, if appropriate.
- We have conducted approximately 5,700 "park and walks" since mid-June, nearly 1,000 in The Port area alone (this does not include Task Force activity). We find this to be an extremely effective method in developing and maintaining community partnerships, identifying quality of life issues, and problem solving with members of the community.
- On June 9, 2018, we participated in the "Safer Homes, Safer Communities" initiative, in conjunction with the Middlesex Sheriff's Office, where we collected 17 firearms in Cambridge. The stories we heard from participants reinforced the importance of this community initiative, and we were pleased that residents took advantage of this opportunity to make their homes safer.
- Detectives in the Criminal Investigations and Special Investigations Units will be directed to focus plainclothes patrols in unmarked police vehicles to support this effort.
- In addition to the Task Force, additional officers deployed to "High-Visibility" walking and bicycle assignments in The Port and a two-officer car assigned to remain at Clement Morgan Park for most of the late afternoon and evening shift with a mandate that officers are visible and out of the cruisers, actively engaging the community to make sure residents feel safe and supported.

Please let me know if you have any questions or additional concerns. I can assure you that the police department is continuously working on a variety of fronts to identify and resolve issues which potentially affect specific neighborhoods, areas, and the City as a whole.

Respectfully,



Branville, G. Bard, Jr.
Police Commissioner