Operational Overview

Village of Maple Bluff Police Department

"The primary and most concerning risks to our community's safety stem from violent criminals and repeat offenders engaging in or about to engage in criminal behavior, as well as reckless drivers. These individuals present the most significant threat to the public's welfare within our community, making them the focus of our efforts. Violent criminals and habitual offenders deliberately inflict harm on others, resulting in an excessive number of victims and crimes. In the same vein, drivers who are reckless significantly increase the likelihood of others becoming victims of accidents, injuries, or worse. To counteract these threats to safety, the Maple Bluff Police Department implements a Problem-Oriented Policing Strategy and related policies. These initiatives aim to deter high-risk offenders from persisting in their damaging behaviors, thereby decreasing the number of victims, and enhancing public safety in our village."

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A Message from the Chief of Police

The release of our 2024 Operational Overview last year documented the Maple Bluff Police Department's initiative to enhance the understanding of operations and culture within our team. We are now releasing this updated version, which is a continuation of that initiative. The following overview covers many of the same topics, ranging from policing strategies to operational priorities, while reinforcing our commitment to aligning daily operations with our mission, values, and leadership philosophy. As with last year's version, the Operational Overview will guide our team, enhance our operational professionalism, and help increase trust between us and with the community we serve.

Our Mission
We passionately deliver exemplary public services and responsible governance to improve the experience and value of our community.

Our Core Values
Integrity, Compassion, Trust, and Dedication.

Our leadership philosophy reinforces a unified commitment to our values, priorities, and approach to decision making. All police officers are leaders, and all leaders are expected to evaluate information and respond to situations through the guiding principles of personal accountability, autonomy and feedback, and authentic leadership.

- **Personal Accountability** – We pursue the courage to constantly remain un-wavered by physical danger, moral dilemma, or emotional strain; practice temperance by exercising exemplary self-control in all decisions and actions; seek wisdom and acknowledge that we are accountable for our thoughts, actions, and choices; and strive for justice by honoring fairness in all aspects of life.

- **Autonomy and Feedback** – The freedom to lead, use deliberate delegation of authority, and practice proactive habits of two-way feedback empowers our team to operate independently within clear guidelines. This fosters self-discipline, initiative, mission alignment, accountability, and growth.

- **Authentic Leadership** – We provide a common vision for the future, demonstrate service to others, have a conviction of values, maintain genuine relationships, and have strong foundations of self-awareness.

I extend my appreciation to every member of our team for their steadfast commitment to upholding our department's values and principles. It is my firm belief that through our unwavering dedication to these precepts, we not only enhance the public's trust in our actions but also fortify the safety and well-being of our community.

Our Comprehensive Strategy

The Village of Maple Bluff Police Department (MBPD) approaches policing in a comprehensive manner that synthesizes problem-oriented policing, community-oriented policing, and procedural justice to create a safer, more secure community. We believe that these three strategies, when integrated effectively, generate optimal policing practices that enhance public safety.

1. Problem-oriented policing forms the foundation of our overall strategy. We are committed to identifying and addressing the most harmful crimes and safety threats in our community, while using proven solutions and our knowledge of trends to guide our actions. We believe that by focusing on the problems that detract from public safety, rather than merely reacting to individual incidents, we can create more effective, long-term solutions.

2. Community-oriented policing is at the heart of our approach. We aim to build strong, collaborative relationships with our community members, recognizing that they are our partners in crime prevention. We believe that by engaging with our community, understanding their concerns, and working together to develop solutions, we can create a safer, more secure environment for all.

3. Procedural justice underpins all our interactions. We are committed to treating all individuals with fairness and respect, ensuring transparency in our actions, and offering community members a voice in the decisions that affect them. We believe that by upholding the principles of procedural justice, we can build trust, enhance legitimacy, and foster cooperation between the police and the community.

The MBPD is dedicated to a holistic policing approach that unifies the most effective strategies. By addressing the most harmful crimes through problem-oriented policing, building collaborative relationships with the community through community-oriented policing, and upholding the principles of fairness and transparency in all interactions via procedural justice, we strive to create an environment of optimal policing practices. This synthesis not only enhances public safety but also fosters trust, legitimacy, and cooperation between our team and the community, ultimately contributing to the creation of a safer and more secure Maple Bluff community for everyone.

Risks to Life and Safety

We prioritize our residents' welfare by addressing the greatest risks to life and safety:

1. Traffic Accidents: Road traffic accidents are a leading cause of death globally. In residential areas, like our community, traffic accidents pose a significant threat to life and safety. *The Wisconsin Department of Transportation estimates that "about 3,000 people are injured by a reckless driver every year in Wisconsin; 118 people were killed in*

2022". More locally, Dane County experienced nearly 9,000 vehicle crashes with approximately 20% resulting in injury or death in 2022, 44 of which were fatalities. As a contextual comparison, Dane County experienced 12 homicides in the same year. **Notably in 2022, approximately 53% of MBPD pursuits involved a suspect who presented a public safety risk prior to the initiation of the pursuit (i.e. threats or acts of violence, reckless driving, driving through traffic signals without regard for public safety, excessive speeding, weaving recklessly through traffic, etc.). This number increased to 75% in 2023 and declined to 60% in 2024.**

2. Crime Rates: Crime rates, including property crimes and violent crimes, can impact the safety of our residents and the general experience of our community. We are fortunate that most of our community members do not experience crime first-hand, but it is notable that almost all the crime we experience is committed by non-residents. *In 2024, the MBPD investigated approximately 138 serious crimes that occurred in our community including 19 instances of reckless endangerment, 1 instance of causing substantial bodily harm while resisting an officer, 1 instance of forcible fondling, 1 instance of physical abuse of an elder person, 3 instances of simple assault, 5 instances of intimidation, 14 weapons law violations, 47 property or identity crimes, and 47 drug violations. In the same year, our officers generated approximately 4,665 calls for service, managed 276 cases, performed 112 in-custody arrests, issued 380 criminal charges, and engaged in 53 vehicle pursuits (35 of which were initiated by our officers).*

3. Fire Hazards and Medical Emergencies: Residential fires and medical emergencies can result in a loss of life, property damage, resident displacement, financial struggle, and emotional trauma. *In 2024, the Maple Bluff Fire Department (MBFD) responded to a total of 182 calls for service, 8 of which were fire calls and 81 were EMS related. The remaining 93 calls for service included 9 hazardous materials calls, 18 general service calls, 39 "good intent" calls, and 27 false alarms. The MBPD provided direct support to the MBFD during 142 calls for service in 2024.*

4. Natural Disasters: Natural disasters such as tornados, floods, heat waves, blizzards, and cold weather events can pose significant threats to life and safety. The Village maintains active communication and relationships with private industry, county, state, and federal government partners to ensure we are well-positioned to manage these often-unforeseeable events. Additionally, we strive to ensure our staffing levels and facilities remain ready to assist residents in the event of a power outage or major event.

Safeguarding the lives and safety of our residents involves a multifaceted approach, considering the diverse range of risks we face. *Since major outages in 2022, the Village has continued to experience an undesirable number of power outages. In 2024, MG&E partnered with the Village to improve the undergrounding of overhead power lines in the most vulnerable areas of our community. With more work to be completed in fall of 2025, the Village will continue to prioritize reducing the community's vulnerability to power outages that often accompany extreme weather conditions.*
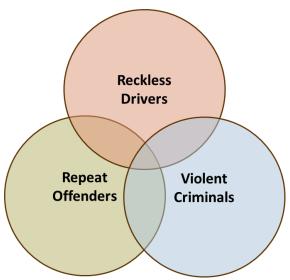
Public Safety Risks in our Community

Pinpointing the greatest persistent threat to public safety is challenging, as threats can come from various sources and contexts. The level and nature of threats can vary depending on factors such as geographical location, socioeconomic conditions, and prevailing social issues. Some common threats to public safety include violent criminals, organized crime groups, terrorist organizations, gangs, domestic violence perpetrators, repeat offenders, impaired drivers, and reckless drivers.

Addressing this wide array of public safety risks requires a comprehensive approach that includes effective law enforcement, community engagement, prevention programs, social services, and addressing underlying societal issues such as poverty, unfairness, and lack of access to education and healthcare. We think it is worthy to note that, as a small department surrounded by a much larger city, only a few of these variables are within our immediate ability to influence – we focus on those.

Evaluated in relation to our unique environment, circumstances, and crime profile, the MBPD assesses violent criminals, repeat offenders, and reckless drivers continue to present the most likely and impactful risks to the safety of our residents.

Risks from "Violent Criminals"

Violent criminals are individuals who engage in acts of violence against others, causing physical harm, injury, or death. These individuals commit offenses that involve the intentional use of force or threat of force to harm or intimidate others. The term "violent criminals" encompasses a range of offenses, which may include individuals who have committed homicides, assaults, domestic assaults, sexual offenses, and robberies among others. Violent criminals are also disproportionately connected to organized crime, street gangs, prison gangs, or other criminal entities for support, resources, and protection.

Addressing violent crime requires a comprehensive approach that includes effective law enforcement, prevention programs, access to mental health services, community engagement, and addressing underlying societal issues such as poverty, inequality, and lack of opportunities. We appreciate and support those individuals and entities outside of law enforcement who consistently strive to address the areas we cannot.

Risks from "Repeat Offenders"

The rate at which criminals reoffend, also known as recidivism, varies depending on several factors, including the nature of the original crime, the individual's personal circumstances, the support and rehabilitation services available to them, and the region in question. **Having a criminal history is not a basis for a law enforcement investigation or arrest; but active unlawful or reckless behavior is. To that end, research has shown that a significant proportion of crimes are committed by repeat offenders and MBPD data trends support these general findings - individuals observed committing crime or reckless behavior in our community are highly likely to be repeat offenders.**

In *2024, approximately 89% of MBPD arrest subjects had been prosecuted for at least 2 prior criminal offenses within the last 5 years, and/or they had an active warrant, were actively violating probation, parole, or other release conditions at the time of their arrest. Similarly, approximately 75% of pursuits involved a suspect with a verified direct nexus to criminality (i.e. violent offender, repeat offender, stolen vehicle, etc.). In fact, of the 53 pursuits our agency was involved in last year, in only 2 instances could we confirm the subjects as non-repeat offenders or as not violating conditions from previous legal action.*

Efforts to address repeat offending often involve targeted interventions such as *focused deterrence strategies*, probation and parole supervision, and rehabilitation programs aimed at reducing recidivism rates and preventing further criminal activity by repeat offenders. As with the challenges in addressing violent offenders, we appreciate and support those individuals and entities outside of law enforcement who consistently strive to address the areas we cannot.

Relationship Between "Violent Criminals" and "Repeat Offenders"

The relationship between violent criminals and repeat offenders is important to note, although not all violent criminals are repeat offenders and not all repeat offenders are violent criminals, the overlap between the two groups highlights the necessity of targeted intervention and law enforcement focus on individuals with a demonstrated pattern of criminal behavior to enhance public safety and reduce recidivism.

According to a report by the U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, about *83% of prisoners released in 2005 across 30 states were arrested at least once in the nine years following their release.* However, this statistic includes all types of crime, not just violent offenses. When looking specifically at violent offenders, the same study found that *about 71% of violent offenders were arrested for a new crime within five years of release, with about 33% arrested for another violent crime.*

Importantly, figures can vary widely from one jurisdiction to another and depending on the specific population being studied. Furthermore, these statistics only account for crimes that result in an arrest, so the actual rate of reoffending may be higher.

Efforts to reduce recidivism rates among violent offenders often focus on rehabilitation and reintegration programs, including mental health services, substance abuse treatment, education and job training, and housing assistance. These programs aim to address the underlying issues that contribute to criminal behavior and provide individuals with the tools and support they need to lead law-abiding lives after release.

Prioritizing the Crime Committed by "Repeat Offenders"

Many past offenders do not go on to commit more crimes, however when we encounter someone committing crime there is a disproportionate likelihood that they have offended before. To that end, arresting repeat offenders who continue to engage in criminal activity is important for several reasons:

1. Public Safety: Repeat offenders who persist in criminal behavior, especially those involved in violent or reckless crime, pose a continued threat to public safety. By arresting repeat offenders who are actively engaged in criminal activity, law enforcement helps protect potential victims and prevent further harm.

2. Accountability and Deterrence: Arresting repeat offenders who persist in criminal behavior holds them accountable for their actions and sends a message that criminal behavior will not be tolerated. This can act as a deterrent to both the individual and others who may be considering engaging in criminal activity.

3. Disruption of Criminal Networks: Repeat offenders may be part of criminal networks or gangs involved in organized crime. By arresting them, law enforcement can disrupt these networks, dismantle criminal operations, and reduce the overall impact of criminal activity in a community.

4. Rehabilitation Opportunities: Arresting repeat offenders who persist in criminal behavior can provide an opportunity for intervention and rehabilitation. Incarceration can offer access to programs and services aimed at addressing underlying issues such as substance abuse, mental health problems, or lack of education and job skills. These interventions can help break the cycle of criminal behavior and support the individual's successful reintegration into society.

5. Justice for Victims: Arresting repeat offenders who persist in criminal behavior can provide a sense of justice and closure for victims of crime. It demonstrates that the criminal justice system takes their experiences seriously and is committed to holding offenders accountable for their actions.

While arresting repeat offenders who persist in criminal behavior is a crucial aspect of law enforcement, it should be part of a broader approach that includes prevention, intervention, and rehabilitation efforts. Addressing the root causes of criminal behavior

and providing support and resources to individuals upon release can help reduce recidivism rates and promote long-term public safety.

Risks from Reckless Drivers

As previously identified, traffic accidents are a leading cause of death globally and pose a significant threat to life and safety in residential communities. Reckless drivers and speeders exacerbate these risks and detract from public safety in several ways:

1. Increased Risk of Accidents: Reckless driving and speeding significantly increase the risk of accidents. When drivers exceed the speed limit or engage in dangerous maneuvers such as weaving in and out of traffic, they have less control over their vehicles and reduced reaction times. This can lead to collisions with other vehicles, pedestrians, or objects on the road, endangering the lives of everyone involved.

2. Reduced Ability to Respond: Speeding and reckless driving impair a driver's ability to respond to unexpected situations on the road. When traveling at high speeds, it becomes more difficult to react to sudden changes in traffic patterns, road conditions, or the actions of other drivers. This lack of responsiveness can lead to accidents and make it challenging to avoid collisions.

3. Increased Severity of Accidents: Speeding and reckless driving also contribute to the severity of accidents. When vehicles are traveling at high speeds, the force of impact in a collision is significantly greater, increasing the likelihood of severe injuries or fatalities. Reckless driving behaviors, such as running red lights or driving aggressively, can also escalate the severity of accidents by causing multiple-vehicle collisions or causing vehicles to roll over.

4. Endangering Pedestrians and Cyclists: Reckless drivers and speeders pose a significant threat to pedestrians and cyclists. When drivers fail to obey traffic laws or drive at excessive speeds, they may not have enough time to react to pedestrians crossing the road or cyclists sharing the same space. This can result in serious injuries or fatalities for vulnerable road users.

5. Influence on Other Drivers: Reckless driving and speeding can influence other drivers on the road. When drivers observe others engaging in dangerous behaviors, they may feel pressured to match their speed or engage in similar reckless actions. This can create a domino effect, increasing the overall risk of accidents and endangering the safety of all road users.

To mitigate these threats to public safety, law enforcement agencies enforce traffic laws, conduct speed enforcement operations, and educate the public about the dangers of reckless driving and speeding. Additionally, public awareness campaigns, improved

infrastructure, and stricter penalties for traffic violations can help deter these behaviors and promote safer road practices.

Addressing Crime and Public Safety Risks in Maple Bluff

The primary and most concerning risks to our community's safety stem from violent criminals and repeat offenders engaged in or about to engage in criminal activity, as well as reckless drivers. These individuals present the most significant threat to the public's welfare within our community, making them the focus of our efforts. Violent criminals and habitual offenders deliberately inflict harm on others, resulting in an excessive number of victims and crimes. In the same vein, reckless drivers significantly increase the likelihood of others becoming victims of accidents, injuries, or worse.

To counteract these threats to the safety of our community, the MBPD implements a Problem-Oriented Policing Strategy and related policies. These initiatives aim to hold offenders accountable and deter them from persisting in their damaging behaviors, thereby decreasing the number of victims, and enhancing public safety.

Our Problem-Oriented Policing (POP) Philosophy

Our philosophy for problem-oriented policing is centered on the principle that a safe community is the product of strategic crime prevention, targeted intervention, and collaborative efforts. We believe that by proactively focusing on the illegal and unsafe actions of violent criminals, repeat offenders, and reckless drivers, we can significantly enhance the safety and security of our community.

We understand that these problems are often symptoms of deeper societal issues, and, within our scope of influence, we aim to offset these underlying factors in our policing strategy. We do so by identifying patterns, priorities, and trends; and using our understanding of the problems to guide our actions while ensuring that our resources are used effectively and efficiently. Similarly, we recognize the importance of community engagement in our efforts. We aim to build strong relationships with community members, fostering trust and open communication. We believe that our community members are crucial partners in our efforts to combat crime and enhance safety.

Ultimately, our goal is to not only respond to crime but to prevent it. By focusing on crime and the unsafe actions of violent criminals, repeat offenders, and reckless drivers, we aim to create an environment where crime and reckless behavior cannot thrive. We believe that through proactive, problem-oriented policing, we can make a significant, lasting impact on the safety of our community and surrounding neighborhoods.

Our POP Operational Priorities

The concept of problem-oriented policing can seem vague and amorphous to those without the background or experience in policing strategy. To help clarify and operationalize this widely utilized approach, the MBPD focuses on six priorities:

1. Proactivity: We identify predictable patterns of behavior that contribute to violent crime, repeat offending, and reckless driving. We then use this information to help anticipate potential problems in our community and attempt intervention before safety issues or crime occur. This involves targeted patrol routines that focus on community thoroughfares from neighboring communities, conducting a high-volume of citizen contacts, and establishing safety campaigns to discourage crime and reckless driving.

2. Communication: We establish and maintain clear lines of communication within the police department, with other village departments, neighboring agencies, and with our community. Constant briefings and updates are provided to all officers about ongoing issues and strategies. Similarly, we consistently strive to understand our community's needs, inform residents about our proactive policing strategy, and to gather their input and feedback through our Citizens Safety and Police Committees.

3. Presence: We strive to maintain a police presence in all areas of our community to deter violent crime, repeat offenders, and reckless drivers. Despite having a small team and limited ability to staff more than one officer on duty at a time, our officers are highly active, conduct foot patrols, seek out community policing opportunities, and participate in specialized traffic and crime enforcement operations. Additionally, we have intentionally placed automated license plate reading technology throughout the community to enhance our public safety video surveillance system. These tools enable our officers' while serving as visual reminders that deter potential offenders and reassure residents of our ongoing efforts to keep them safe.

4. Rapid Response: Given the small size of our community, we leverage our ability to rapidly respond to all incidents, not just incidents of violent crime, repeat offending, and reckless driving. We strive to improve processes, procedures, staffing, and administrative obligations that often compete with and detract from our officers' patrol duties. Rapid response is essential to minimize harm, apprehend offenders, and demonstrate our commitment to community safety.

5. Public Engagement: We consistently seek to engage with our community so we can understand their concerns, gather information, and build partnerships. Despite limited staffing, we attend community meetings and events, update the public through our website and social media, and engage in collaborative problem-solving initiatives. Ultimately, public engagement enhances trust, improves intelligence, and can mobilize community resources.

6. Investigative Vigor: We invest in training and resources to enhance the investigative skills of our officers. Given our size, highly technical investigative expertise is difficult to

establish and maintain. To offset this challenge, we incentivize and encourage specialized training in investigation for all our officers. Strong investigations increase the chances of successful prosecutions, deter potential offenders, and provide justice for victims.

Our capacity to pursue these operational priorities is consistently reviewed and updated to ensure we remain effective and responsive to the needs of our community. We are committed to a proactive, problem-oriented policing strategy that enhances community safety and builds public trust.

Costs and Benefits of Proactive Policing

Not every police department can police proactivity like we do. That said, every decision comes with tradeoffs and proactive policing is no different. As such, it is important to understand the general tradeoffs and seek to mitigate costs when able.

Common Costs of Having a Proactive Police Department:

1. Financial Costs: Proactive policing can require more resources, including personnel, equipment, and technology. This can lead to increased costs for the police department and the community it serves.

2. Perception of Over-Policing: Proactive policing can sometimes lead to a perception of over-policing, which can result in strained relationships between the police and the community.

3. Perception of Bias: Some proactive policing strategies can lead to concerns of bias, which may further strain relationships between the police and the community.

4. Increased Stress for Officers: Proactive policing can be more stressful for officers, as it requires them to constantly be active and alert, rather than simply responding to calls.

Common Benefits of Having a Proactive Police Department:

1. Crime Prevention: Proactive policing can help to prevent crimes before they occur, rather than simply responding to them after the fact. This can lead to safer communities and lower crime rates.

2. Community Engagement: Proactive policing often involves community engagement, which can help to build trust and cooperation between the police and the community.

3. Increased Efficiency: By preventing crimes before they occur, proactive policing can help to make the police department more efficient. Reducing the need for highly laborious investigative activity frees up resources for other important tasks.

4. Improved Public Safety: Ultimately, the goal of proactive policing is to improve public safety. By preventing crimes and engaging with the community, proactive policing can help to create safer, more secure communities.

Balancing Costs and Benefits of Proactivity

Understanding the costs and benefits of proactive policing, we strive to find an appropriate balance for optimal community experience through:

1. Community Policing: We emphasize building relationships and working closely with community members. This allows us to build trust, improve communication, and foster a sense of shared responsibility for public safety.

2. Training and Education: We prioritize officer training in proactive policing strategies that respect civil rights and reduce potential for bias. This includes training in de-escalation techniques, cultural sensitivity, and implicit bias.

3. Transparency and Accountability: We are transparent about our policies and practices, and we hold ourselves and our officers accountable for actions.

4. Use of Technology: We use technology to enhance proactive policing efforts. This includes proprietary and privileged law enforcement intelligence tools, a public safety video surveillance system, and Flock automated license plate reading technology. These tools are all used responsibly to avoid a misperception of over-policing, violation of privacy, or bias.

5. Regular Evaluation: We regularly evaluate our proactive policing strategies to ensure they are effective and not causing harm to the community. We review data on crime rates and operational outcomes, as well as conduct thorough investigations into any public complaints and adjust our practices as necessary or appropriate.

6. Community Input: We respect and value input and feedback from our community. Our Citizen's Safety and Police Committees are strategic partners in our ability to maintain these lines of communication. We consistently look for, and are open to, new opportunities for other forms of helpful public input.

7. Balanced Approach: We ultimately seek to maintain a balanced approach that combines proactive policing with reactive policing to ensure that we are not only preventing crime, but also responding effectively when it does occur.

Flock Automated License Plate Reader (ALPR) System Data Use

In 2023, we invested in 7 Flock ALPR readers that are strategically placed throughout the Village. Information about how the Flock ALPR system is utilized by the MBPD to support

our public safety obligations is available on our police department webpage (https://villageofmaplebluff.com/police/).

Flock Safety technology captures objective evidence without compromising individual privacy. Notably, Flock auto-purges data after 30 days unless an officer has an investigative or public safety reason to retain images for longer. We utilize retroactive search to solve crimes after they've occurred. Additionally, we utilize real time alerting of hotlist vehicles to capture wanted criminals. In an effort to ensure proper usage and that "guardrails" are in place, policies and usage statistics are available to the public on our webpage and at https://transparency.flocksafety.com/maple-bluff-wi-pd.

Unmarked Police Vehicles

Police officers face real and persistent threats in performing their duties and agency leaders have an obligation to keep their officers safe – we do this through mitigation. *Between 2013 and 2023, approximately 549 law enforcement officers were feloniously killed in the United States. 177 of those officers were killed while performing investigative or enforcement duties, 90 were ambushed, and 55 were the result of an unprovoked attack. Approximately 63% of those killed during this timeframe were on patrol, and those conducting one-officer patrol were over 3.5 times more frequently victims than those on two-officer patrols. Similarly in 2023, more than 79,000 officers were assaulted nationally, with 33% sustaining injuries.*

Unmarked squad vehicles can play a crucial role in mitigating the danger to our officers – one reason many police departments around the country use them. The inconspicuous nature of unmarked vehicles allows officers to blend into their surroundings, making them less likely to be targeted. They also enable officers to approach potentially dangerous situations discreetly, reducing the risk of escalation. Furthermore, unmarked vehicles can be used for surveillance and stakeouts, providing an additional layer of safety for officers on duty. Thus, unmarked squad vehicles are an essential tool in enhancing officer safety and reducing the inherent risks of the profession.

The MBPD began utilizing unmarked squad cars in 2016 when we started the MBPD K-9 program. As a vehicle that our K-9 officer took home, the squad car was intentionally designed as unmarked to promote the officer's safety – we understood that a marked squad car is easily identifiable from a greater distance, can subject an officer to unwanted attention or attack, and present a serious safety risk from individuals wanting to target the officer or their family. During this trial period, we also found that by maintaining a recognizable but lower profile our K-9 officer could better observe crime and thus, gather evidence that directly enhanced probabilities of successful prosecutions.

In 2020, understanding the potential benefits of unmarked vehicles, we replaced two marked squad cars with one unmarked car and one marked car that was outfitted with more subdued "ghost graphics". These subdued graphics are often adopted by agencies,

such as ours, who wish to establish a balance between the benefits of traditional marked vehicles and those that unmarked vehicles can bring to operations. Ultimately, unmarked squad cars are used by police for a variety of reasons, particularly in patrol operations:

1. **Investigative and Enforcement Capacity:** Unmarked cars are less noticeable, allowing police officers to blend in with regular traffic and observe criminal activity without being easily detected. This can be particularly useful in patrol operations or when trying to catch drivers committing traffic violations.

2. **Deterrence:** The knowledge that any car could potentially be a police vehicle can act as a deterrent for reckless driving and other criminal activities. Our officers operate with a finite set of resources and can only be in one location at a time. Deterring criminal activity and unsafe behavior is an invaluable component of our operational strategy.

3. **Versatility:** Unmarked cars can be used in a wider range of operations. Although we primarily conduct patrol operations, law enforcement is a dynamic profession that can require a multitude of investigative actions. Unmarked vehicles enable our officers to perform patrol and investigative duties in varying circumstances.

4. **Efficacy and Safety:** Unmarked cars can sometimes arrive at the scene of a crime without alerting or alarming the suspects, increasing the chances of catching them in the act. A lower profile approach to crimes in progress also enhances officer safety. Ultimately, limiting immediate distinction as a police vehicle also serves to reduce safety concerns when the vehicle is utilized outside of our jurisdiction, issued as a take-home vehicle, used for travel to training, and transported to maintenance facilities.

5. **Reduce Bias Potential:** When police use unmarked cars, they may be able to reduce the likelihood of bias in their policing. Potential offenders won't know to change their behavior based on seeing a marked police car, allowing officers to make and use objective observations to inform fair and impartial enforcement decisions.

Green Uniform Option

When updating our Police Department patch and uniform regulations in early 2023, we added an option for officers to wear olive drab green with their Class B uniforms. Black is still an option, and regularly worn. The introduction of green uniforms was intended to boost morale of our team, and offers several potential operational benefits:

1. **Crowd Visibility:** Green can be distinctly visible, making officers easy to spot in a crowd. Enhanced identification in crowded areas and special events can be beneficial for public safety and help deter potential criminal activity.

2. **Environmental Blending:** In other situations, such as naturalistic or wooded settings, green uniforms can provide camouflage, helping officers maintain a tactical advantage by

blending in with their surroundings. Whether in the Village or providing mutual assistance to a neighboring agency, our officers often find themselves in varying environments that make green a more versatile color.

3. **Calming Effect:** Some research suggests that the color green can have a calming effect and may be associated with safety and stability. This can help reduce the psychological barrier often created by police uniforms, potentially influencing public perception, and improving interactions with police officers.

4. **Multi-Agency Identification:** Our officers are frequently assisted by outside agencies and aid in emergent circumstances outside of the village. Green uniforms can help distinguish our police officers from other agencies and emergency service personnel who typically wear blue or black uniforms.

5. **Comfort:** Green can be cooler and more comfortable to wear in hot weather compared to darker colors like black. Given the amount of equipment officers must wear, summer months can be difficult to endure and allowing the option to wear green can provide some much-welcomed relief.

6. **Professional Appearance:** Green uniforms still provide a professional and authoritative appearance, which can enhance the public's perception. Despite the calming effect of green, it also strikes a balance and enables our officers to maintain an orderly presence.

Background on Crime Statistics

Police statistics in Wisconsin originate from local records management software (RMS), which are privileged systems used by law enforcement agencies to collect, store, and manage case files. This includes information about crimes, arrests, incidents, and other law enforcement activities. When a crime is reported or an arrest is made, the details are entered into the local RMS for case management purposes. This data is then submitted via a coded file to the Wisconsin Department of Justice's Wisconsin (WDOJ) Incident-Based Reporting System (WIBRS) and Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) programs monthly. WIBRS is a system that collects detailed information about each single crime occurrence, while UCR is a nationwide, cooperative statistical effort that has been collecting voluntarily reported data on crimes brought to the attention of law enforcement since 1930. The WIBRS portal compiles and analyzes the submitted data to produce statistics about crime rates, types of crimes, locations of crimes, and other relevant information (https://www.doj.state.wi.us/dles/bjia/wibrs-data).

In 2023, the MBPD hired a new staff member to manage records and data. We focused efforts on correcting past gaps in police department data management, updating historic data entries, and ultimately ensuring data integrity moving forward. Throughout the second half of 2023, we worked backwards to ensure that our data entry was adequate to properly communicate with the BJIA dashboards as well as provide usable statistics

within our department. As a result, we have an internal set of crime statistics, and those statistics update the WDOJ's WIBRS database accurately. Our department has consistently fulfilled its data reporting requirements and remains committed to improving our use of data to inform administrative and operational priorities.

Incident and Crime Statistics from 2018 to 2024

The MBPD tracks incident and crime statistics that are directly derived from our RMS. These statistics reports reflect the data that is provided directly to the WIBRS and UCR programs which utilize their standardized methodologies to provide the broader public with comparable crime statistics through their respective web-accessible dashboards.

Year	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total
All Police Incidents	*2294*	*2348*	*1869*	*2445*	*2438*	*3126*	*4662*
Traffic Stop / Investigations	1091	1059	678	1207	966	1092	1365
Check Properties	77	78	88	75	224	666	1613
Assist Police	228	288	234	309	396	364	347
Assist Fire / EMS	99	94	94	89	96	104	142
Stratified Policing	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	14	256
In-Custody Arrests	76	67	40	78	94	101	112
Cite & Release Arrests	38	16	17	19	13	13	10
Arrest of Wanted / Repeat Offender	43	51	22	52	71	77	100
Subjects Fleeing MBPD in Car	N/A	18	23	40	40	44	35
Number of Cases	236	237	202	236	323	303	276
All Crimes	*334*	*340*	*279*	*373*	*473*	*481*	*440*
Serious Crimes	111	117	89	82	145	136	138
Assaults / Endangerment	0	4	5	14	18	19	25
Intimidation	2	1	3	7	6	5	5
Weapons Violations	5	1	2	1	6	7	14
Property Crimes	47	77	53	35	90	55	47
Drug Violations	57	34	26	25	25	50	47
Minor Crimes	223	223	190	291	328	345	302
Disorderly Conduct	3	4	7	12	8	8	5
DUI / Liquor	45	19	26	25	27	25	16
Trespass	22	24	22	6	44	21	4
Other	153	176	135	248	249	291	277

Charging Statistics from 2018 to 2024

The MBPD also tracks criminal charges issued by our department for prosecution consideration. In alignment with our broader strategies, the MBPD prioritizes charges indicative of violence, repetitive offending, and dangerous driving behaviors:

- Charges for wanted or warrant apprehensions as well as individuals observed actively violating probation, parole, bail, or bond conditions (*WPB).
- Charges for dangerous and unsafe driving behaviors.
- Charges for resisting and/or obstructing our officers.
- Charges for violent, assaultive, intimidation, and/or weapons offenses (**VAIW).

Year	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total
All Criminal Charges	*286*	*240*	*151*	*255*	*293*	*336*	*380*
All Priority Charges	84	83	56	144	170	193	253
Priority – *WPB	34	49	19	64	82	96	145
Priority – Dangerous Driving	36	25	21	44	53	52	43
Priority – Resisting / Obstructing	8	5	10	18	19	26	24
Priority – **VAIW	6	4	6	18	16	19	41

Outcomes from 2024 Priorities

In 2024, MBPD leadership focused on key initiatives to improve public safety, strengthen department capabilities, and enhance service delivery to the community. Our efforts yielded the following outcomes:

1. Competitive Wages to Enhance Retention & Recruitment: The successful passage of the 2024 referendum allowed MBPD to establish more competitive wages, aligning officer pay with comparable agencies in Dane County and the greater Madison area. As a result, our ability to recruit and retain qualified officers has significantly improved. While one officer departed for an external opportunity in early 2025, we were able to identify and recruit a highly qualified new officer within weeks, reinforcing our confidence in the effectiveness of our improved wages and recruitment strategy.

2. Improved Support Staffing to Address Administrative Demands: With referendum funding, we formally transitioned the Records Administrator / Administrative Support Specialist role back under the MBPD budget, rather than the Administration Department. This change ensures that officers can focus on core policing duties, while critical administrative and records functions receive the dedicated support they require.

3. Additional Officer Staffing Considerations: While the referendum did not include funding for additional sworn officers, our discussions with the community provided valuable feedback and an awareness of the support for possible future expansion. Given Madison's continued growth around Maple Bluff, we remain prepared to revisit this initiative when appropriate. Should the need arise, MBPD has a structured plan for engaging with stakeholders and recommending the enhancement of staffing levels.

4. Advancing Officer Wellness & Support: In 2024, MBPD strengthened its commitment to officer well-being through structured wellness initiatives. We instituted mandatory annual wellness visits for all full-time officers and expanded access to optional wellness resources for the entire team. Additionally, we introduced the department's first-ever Chaplaincy Program, providing officers with regular check-ins, ride-alongs, and personal support. To further bolster officer wellness, MBPD leadership partnered with key community stakeholders to launch the We Support Local Officers Foundation (WSLO), a nonprofit dedicated to supporting law enforcement personnel of the MBPD.

5. Expanded Community Outreach & Engagement: More MBPD officers actively participated in community events in 2024 than in any previous year. Traditionally, officers remained in the background at these gatherings, but a more visible and engaged approach received overwhelming positive feedback from residents. This shift has strengthened trust, enhanced relationships, and reinforced MBPD's role as a dedicated community partner.

6. Technology & Equipment Upgrades for Safety & Efficiency: in 2024, MBPD made key investments in patrol vehicle replacements, equipping two new squad cars with pursuit intervention bars to improve enforcement capabilities and officer safety. We also adopted a new body-worn and in-squad camera system, integrating a streamlined dashboard for video tagging, retention, redaction, and evidence management—enhancing both operational efficiency and transparency.

7. Commitment to Officer Development & Training: MBPD remains committed to professional development, with all full-time officers maintaining state instructor certification in various disciplines. Our full-time officers completed an average of 83 training hours per officer in 2024, significantly exceeding the state minimum of 24 training hours. This investment ensures that our team remains highly skilled and prepared to meet evolving public safety challenges.

2025 Priorities and Initiatives

After reviewing the impact of our strategy and operations over the past 7 years, it is apparent that the proactive nature of our team has kept our community safe while generating a higher number of incidents, arrests, and charges issued for prosecution. In addition to more arrests, we also saw the highest percentage of wanted / repeat offender arrests in the past 7 years at 89%. These tend to be more dangerous individuals with

more to lose from apprehension, increasing the risk to our officers and highlighting the critical importance of sound tactical decision-making and judgement. We also observed the first decrease in the number of subjects fleeing from our officers since we started collecting this data in 2019. While our department was involved in the same number of pursuits in 2023 and 2024, the number of pursuits initiated by our department were 44 and 35 respectively – demonstrating a welcomed decline in subjects fleeing our officers.

Looking forward, we anticipate multiple development initiatives in surrounding neighborhoods. **The housing development will bring additional traffic, calls for service, and mutual aid requests for our small team**. Given the observable need for professional police services now more than ever, results from our department's approach, and anticipated future challenges, the **MBPD's long-term goals and operational objectives remain unchanged:**

Long-Term Goals

Exceptional Services
Trusting Relationships
Officer Competence and Safety
Team Oriented Professionalism
Criminal Deterrence

Operational Objectives

Officer Development and Capacity Building
Appropriate Guidance and Feedback
Proportionate Enforcement Responses
High Quality Equipment and Resources
Optimal Staffing Coverage

To achieve these goals and objectives, MBPD leadership prioritizes the following:

1. Maintain competitive wages while finding additional ways to reinforce the department's morale and culture, as well as retention and recruitment capacity.
2. Explore new options – technologies, tools, processes, and/or other efficiencies – that can help offset administrative and logistical challenges.
3. Prioritize resources and staffing schedules to maximize public safety and enable two-officer coverage as much as possible.
4. Continue to engage in staff wellness initiatives and other support resources to minimize potential for acute psychological trauma, stress injuries, and low morale.
5. Expand department's community outreach initiatives and event participation to further build and enhance trust throughout the community.

6. Continue to invest in equipment and technology initiatives that improve safety, efficiency, and professional service delivery.
7. Continuation of high-quality officer training and professional development initiatives to enhance competency and professional service delivery.

Maintain Competitive Wages While Reinforcing Morale, Culture, and Retention

❖ Conduct ongoing assessments to ensure MBPD remains aligned with market trends and regional comparable wages and benefits.

❖ Implement structured officer recognition programs, acknowledging high performance, community engagement, and leadership.

❖ Foster team morale by expanding mentorship programs, reinforcing leadership development pathways, and creating internal career progression opportunities.

❖ Explore alternative incentives beyond compensation, such as flexible scheduling, enhanced wellness benefits, or skill-development stipends.

Explore Technologies, Tools, and Process Efficiencies to Offset Requirements

❖ Consider modifications to our operational structure to enhance the efficacy and efficiency of leadership, administration, and management practices.

❖ Assess and integrate automation tools to streamline reporting, records management, and evidence handling.

❖ Implement new data-driven analytics tools to enhance operational efficiency, allowing officers to spend more time in the field.

❖ Explore additional AI-assisted tools for case file organization, transcription, and administrative processing.

❖ Seek public-private partnerships for funding technology upgrades, minimizing direct budgetary impact.

Prioritize to Maximize Public Safety and Two-Officer Coverage

❖ Evaluate call data and incident trends to refine priority-based scheduling, ensuring peak-hour two-officer coverage whenever feasible.

❖ Explore alternative staffing models, such as flexible shift bidding or staggered start times, to maximize coverage without additional personnel costs.

❖ Increase collaboration with regional partners to coordinate mutual aid responses, minimizing strain on MBPD resources while maintaining strong local coverage.

❖ Continue efforts to educate the public and local leadership on long-term staffing needs, preparing for potential future budget discussions.

Continuing Wellness Initiatives to Reduce Stress Injuries and Boost Morale

❖ Continue mandatory wellness check-ins for all full-time officers while ensuring confidentiality and accessibility for voluntary participation.

❖ Strengthen the MBPD Chaplaincy Program, expanding direct support options tailored to officer well-being.

❖ Explore partnerships with mental health professionals specializing in law enforcement stress management.

❖ Integrate fatigue management strategies into scheduling practices, reducing burnout risk.

Expand Community Outreach and Event Participation to Strengthen Trust

❖ Build on previously successful engagement efforts, ensuring officers remain visible and approachable at community events.

❖ Develop new outreach programs, such as event-based safety presentations, senior citizen welfare checks, or other liaison initiatives.

❖ Increase the department's engagement in public messaging with positive storytelling, highlighting MBPD's role in community service.

Invest to Improve Safety, Efficiency, and Professional Service Delivery

❖ Evaluate emerging public safety technologies, such as drones for situational awareness, AI-assisted body-worn camera analytics, and automated license plate readers.

❖ Explore upgraded equipment and communications tools, including individual gear, mobile data terminals (MDTs), and radios.

- ❖ Continue fleet modernization efforts, ensuring officers have reliable and up-to-date vehicles optimized for public safety.

- ❖ Secure grant funding for protective equipment, non-lethal weapons, and enhanced duty gear, to mitigate risks associated with dynamic or high-threat encounters.

Continue High-Quality Training and Professional Development Initiatives

- ❖ Maintain MBPD's high training standards, ensuring all officers well-exceed state training minimums.

- ❖ Focus scenario-based training on high-risk situations, de-escalation techniques, and tactical decision-making.

- ❖ Expand cross-training opportunities, allowing officers to develop additional skill sets in areas such as investigations, community policing, or technical response units.

- ❖ Reinforce career development pathways, providing mentorship and advanced training for officers aspiring to leadership roles.

Final Thoughts

As we look ahead, the MBPD remains committed to the principles of proactive policing, professional development, and community trust. We have seen the tangible benefits of our approach—higher rates of repeat offender arrests, decreased instances of fleeing suspects, and stronger officer retention due to competitive wages.

The challenges we face are evolving. Population growth in surrounding communities, increasing demands, and emerging public safety threats require that we remain adaptable, innovative, and resourceful in our approach. Through leveraging technology, strategic relationships, efficient resource allocation, and continued officer development, the MBPD is preparing to meet these challenges head-on.

As always, our success is rooted in partnerships—both within the department and with the community we serve. By remaining transparent, engaging with residents, and reinforcing our shared commitment to safety, we ensure that Maple Bluff remains a secure, thriving community where people feel protected and supported.

MBPD will continue to evolve, improve, and serve with the same integrity, dedication, and professionalism that has defined our agency. Thank you for your continued service!