



NEW ORLEANS POLICE DEPARTMENT

THIRD DISTRICT

COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN: CRIME REDUCTION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

JUNE 2023





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THIRD DISTRICT**

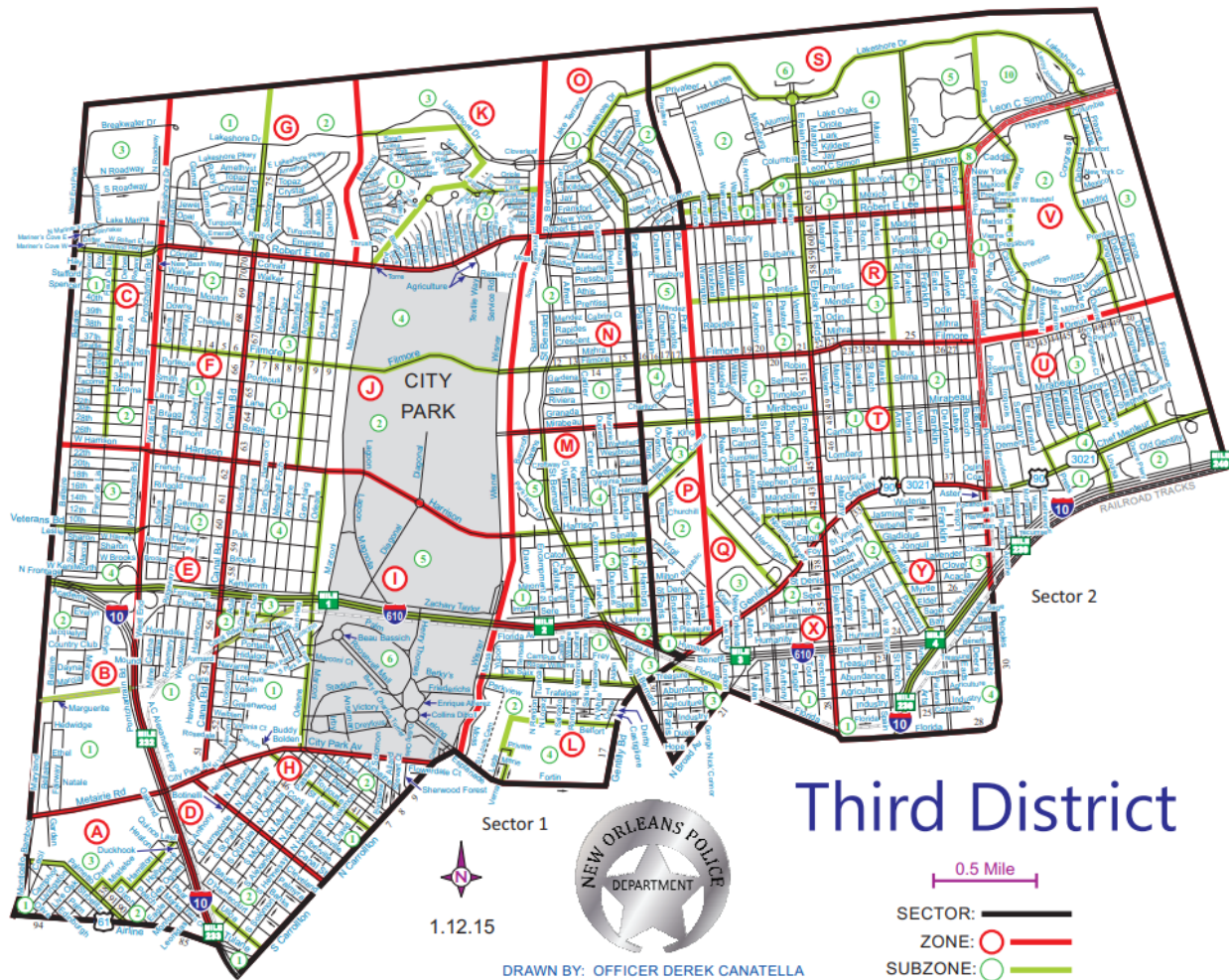
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THIRD DISTRICT OVERVIEW

The Third District encompasses approximately 15 square miles, making it the second-largest police district in the City of New Orleans. Its boundaries are Jefferson Parish to the east, Lake Pontchartrain to the north, I-610 to the south, and the Intercoastal Canal to the west. The District currently serves a population of approximately 30,000 residents. The police station is located at 4600 Paris Avenue. The District has 61 officers as of May 5, 2023. The District phone number is 504-658-6030. The Third District can be contacted by email at NOPD3rdDistrict@nola.gov. For more information about the work of these officers, please follow the Facebook page account: <https://www.facebook.com/NOPDThird/>.



LEADERSHIP



Captain Merlin A. Bush joined the New Orleans Police Department in July 1997. His first assignment was the 3rd District. He was promoted to the rank of Sergeant in December of 2004. Captain Bush has held various assignments in the New Orleans Police Department's Third, Fifth, and Sixth Districts. He worked in the C.O.P.S. Unit, Taskforce, Homicide, Narcotics, and S.W.A.T. Team as a police officer and Team Leader. In 2006, Superintendent Warren Riley selected him to run an elite unit of the Department called the Crime Abatement Team, which was manned by twelve New Orleans Police Officers and six DEA Agents. In 2007, Captain Bush returned to S.W.A.T. Team as a Sergeant/Team Leader, where he led the Second Tactical Platoon for seven years. Captain Bush was then temporarily assigned as the acting Lieutenant of the Special Operations Division before he was moved to the Violent Offender Warrant Squad.

In 2016, Captain Bush became the Commander of the Canine Division. Captain Bush was successful in decreasing Canine's bite ratio from an average of 60% to 0% over a three-year period.

In March of 2019, Captain Bush was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant. He was assigned to the First District as the Assistant Commander. As the Assistant Commander of the First District, he was responsible for over 90 officers. He additionally led the 1st District Investigations unit and played a major role in the reduction of violent crime during his time there.

Captain Bush became the Assistant Commander of the New Orleans Police Department's Homicide Division in July of 2020. He supervised over 40 Detectives and civilians while in the Homicide unit. The Homicide unit finished the year with a 34% solve rate in 2020 and the Cold Case unit solved 2 cases during the same year. Under Lieutenant Bush's leadership, in 2021 the Cold Case unit solved 22 cases, which was a 1000% increase over the prior year. The Homicide unit additionally ended the year 2023 with a 55% solve rate. The city also had a reduction of 73 murders from the prior year.

In March of 2024, he was promoted to the Rank of Captain and assigned as the Commander of the 3rd District.

Captain Bush has 26.5 years of police service with the New Orleans Police Department. He is a certified FBI trained instructor and adjunct instructor at the New Orleans Police Academy. Captain Bush has a bachelor's degree in criminal justice administration from the University of Columbia Southern.



Lieutenant Jeffrey Giroir has been with the New Orleans Police Department (NOPD) for over 26 years and is currently serving as the District Investigations Unit Commander for the Third District, where he has demonstrated exceptional leadership, strategic acumen, and a deep commitment to community safety.

Starting his career in 1998 with the NOPD, Lieutenant Giroir has held various positions, including Platoon Lieutenant, K9 Unit Sergeant, and Street Gang Unit Sergeant. His roles have required him to oversee sizable teams, manage high-stakes operations, and ensure adherence to departmental standards. Notable accomplishments include enhancing firearm arrest rates and successfully coordinating with federal agencies on high-profile drug trafficking cases.

With a reputation for fostering strong community relationships and driving effective crime reduction strategies, Lieutenant Giroir is a dedicated and influential figure in the field of law enforcement, continuously working towards a safer community.

His training includes specialized courses from the Regional Counterdrug Training Academy and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, reflecting his commitment to staying at the forefront of law enforcement practices. His efforts have been recognized with numerous commendations, including Unit Citations and the Superintendent's Coin for Service Excellence.

His professional journey is complemented by an extensive educational background, holding a master's degree in criminal justice and Police Administration and a Bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice from Loyola University New Orleans.

THIRD DISTRICT TEAM



The District Sergeant of Administration, Calvin Banks, has served the City of New Orleans for 14 years. Sergeant Banks is essential to daily operations and supervises the School Resource (SRO) and Community Liaison (CLO) Officers within the Third District. When Sergeant Banks is not busy conducting his administrative duties, he assists both the School Resource Officer and the Community Liaison by attending events hosted within the community. Sergeant Banks also assists Captain Contreras and Lieutenant Avery Matthews with monthly NONPACC meetings.



School Resource Officer Nahlisha Johnson, a 22-year veteran with the department, is responsible for responding to calls for service at all schools located within the Third District. In addition, Officer Johnson coordinates youth engagement events at these schools in hopes of building rapport with the students. From game days to book readings, Officer Johnson makes her role as a School Resource Officer known to the wonderful students she serves.



Community Liaison Officer Marylou Agustin, an 8-year veteran with the New Orleans Police Department. Officer Agustin is responsible for assisting citizens of the Third District with quality-of-life issues. As CLO, Officer Agustin is responsible for hosting monthly NONPACC meetings, attending neighborhood association meetings and proactively identifying Quality of Life issues that may violate civil and criminal statutes. Through this type of community engagement, members of the community are able to know Officer Agustin on a more personal level, which better aids in understanding the ailments of specific neighborhoods. Officer Agustin has extensive experience with government agencies which will assist her in identifying and engaging the correct city department on quality-of-life issues. Lastly, Officer Agustin participates in community engagement events within the Third District.

COMMUNITY POLICING AND ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The New Orleans Police Department's Community Policing and Engagement Program consists of a Community Policing and Engagement Policy, Community Policing and Engagement Manual, and Community Policing Plans.

The Community Policing & Engagement Policy states the New Orleans Police Department shall promote and strengthen community partnerships, engage constructively with the community, ensure collaborative problem solving, ensure ethical and bias-free policing, and increase community confidence in the Department.

The Community Policing and Engagement Manual is designed to be a long term, aspirational document that will enhance the NOPD's community engagement, community policing, and problem-oriented policing procedures. The objectives of this manual are meant to guide officers on how to foster positive community engagement interactions between citizens and NOPD by utilizing community policing ideals, creating opportunities for substantive engagement with the community, and fostering substantive collaboration with the community through civic engagement.



COMMUNITY POLICING PRIORITIES

Given the issues raised by the Community, the primary focus of the Third District Community Action Plan will be:

1. To increase patrols in areas with increasing crime trends.
2. Engagement with youth through school activities and events; and
3. Community outreach and transparency

In 2020, the Third District hosted monthly NONPACC meetings virtually, during which time they were made aware of public safety concerns as well as the quality-of-life issues. The Community Liaison Officer (CLO) also continued attending neighborhood association meetings, which were held virtually.

The main quality of life issues brought up during these meetings were related to abandoned vehicles. Many community members found abandoned vehicles to be a major nuisance in their communities, as it not only created an eye-sore but they found it to impede their daily operations. One woman even feared for her safety because an abandoned vehicle parked directly in front of her residence impeded her vision when backing out of her driveway, thus almost causing numerous accidents. Due to an uptick in carjackings, she also feared that individuals wishing to do her harm could easily hide behind the abandoned vehicle and attack her while she was coming and going from her residence.

Another topic that is often mentioned in neighborhood association meetings, as well as NONPACC, is the nuisance of excessive speeding. Many citizens are fearful that a tragic accident will occur because of excessive speeding and reckless driving. Oftentimes, individuals observing these actions will immediately call for police assistance; however, upon the arrival of officers, the offenders are long gone. Residents of Ponchartrain Park are constantly complaining of excessive speeding along Press Drive.



ACTIONABLE ITEMS

Actionable items are concrete steps that the District will take to implement the Community Outreach and Community Action Plan. Actionable items will be quantified or qualified through data analytics and anecdotes. The purpose of actionable items is to ensure transparency. To that end, the actionable items will be updated monthly to demonstrate to the community the exact steps that the District executed.

TASKS


1. The Third District will initiate area patrols, including walking beats and blue light patrols, to reduce violent crime in areas where crime trends show an increase in violent crime. Increased patrol presence in violent crime areas will be documented. Any arrests made because of these patrols will be reported to the community. Ponchartrain Park is riddled with property crimes. Officers began conducting patrols in the neighborhood consistently, which not only deterred crime but also allowed residents and officers to build positive relationships. As a result of this plan of action, Ponchartrain Park has seen a decrease in property crimes.

Task #1: Implementation of Geographical Deployment will allow officers to be assigned to a specific sector within the Third District. These sectors are strategically split into four sectors, which will be staffed according to the volume of calls. Geo-deployment allows officers to get to know residents within their respective sectors better, allowing community members to feel more comfortable reporting crimes. Also, officers are better able to coordinate and participate in community engagements. Lastly, members of the community are better serviced as response times are lower due to an officer always being present in his/her respective sector.

- a. Officers will conduct proactive patrols, engage citizens to gain feedback on crime occurrences, and document citizen interactions in an NOPD Community Policing Form.
- b. The District Captain, or designee, will present updates to the community at monthly community meetings held at the police district station.

Task #2: Assign officers to proactive area patrols of areas experiencing high occurrences of violent crimes within their respective sector. These patrols are to include directed vehicle and foot patrols. This will help with determining if there was a decrease in criminal activity because of calls for service and self-initiated calls in the targeted area.

- a. Report how much time was spent on area patrols, which is to be shared with the community.
- b. The District Captain will coordinate with the Crime Analytics Unit to develop reports.

- c.  District officers will review reports at roll call on a monthly basis and discuss strategies to reduce crime.
 - d. The Community Liaison Officer will partner with City agencies on non-enforcement action that can reduce crime, such as partnering with Code Enforcement to tear down a blighted property that is in close proximity to where a crime is repeatedly occurring.
2. The Third District values the importance of youth engagement. The School Resource Officer will participate in various activities and events with students, which will foster positive interactions with law enforcement. Third District Officers/Rank will attend these events as well. These youth events are integral to the Community Action Plan because they facilitate an early and positive relationship between law enforcement and children, hopefully lasting into adulthood.



Task #1: Through interactions, officers will have open discussions with youth to foster trust. Officers will also engage with youth in district churches, day camps, and sports activities.

Task #2: Officers will document all interactions, including the type of event and attendance records. All interactions will be documented via NONPACC (monthly community meeting at the police district station) and updated Facebook posts.

Task #3: The SRO will coordinate with the Community Engagement Section's Police Athletic League to include officers and youth in activities the Community Engagement Section spearheaded.

3. The Third District will continue to provide community outreach and awareness through Facebook posts and monthly "New Orleans Neighbors and Police Anti-Crime Council" (NONPACC) meetings. These meetings will continue to be held in person and virtually.

Task #1: To increase community awareness, the District will notify/remind respective neighborhood association presidents, civic clubs, school administration, and churches of upcoming NONPACC meetings. Links to attend these meetings virtually will also be provided to these members.

Task #2: Community events attended by Third District officers/rank will be shared with the community via Facebook posts, which will promote accountability and visibility for the district, as well as promote awareness of the district's civic activity.

4. Officers assigned to the Third District will engage with community members and assist them with crime prevention tips.

Task #1: Officers will promote crime prevention strategies by educating residents and business owners on topics such as lighting, door security, engraving property, etc. Officers will also advise

on possible areas of improvement which can aid in deterring crime (i.e. cutting high shrubs, motion lighting, alarms, etc.). These interactions will be documented in Community Policing Forms by the respective officer.

Task #2: The Community Liaison Officer (CLO) will employ the crime triangle and SARA on high-crime areas and continually update neighborhood associations on criminal activity and prevention methods. The CLO will document the number of organizations she/he met with monthly prior to the NONPACC meeting.

APPENDIX

Annual Survey Results

1. **In your opinion, what are the greatest problems in your neighborhood and how can the police department help? Please provide your neighborhood association and specific examples.**
 - a. Car Break ins and Speeding Arc's on weekend
 - b. Speeding on Press drive
 - c. Hollygrove-Dixon Neighborhood. New groups of teenage males, dressed in black, displaying guns in their waistbands.
 - d. No crime cameras
 - e. I live in the Banks St Bar area. The biggest problems in my neighborhood are drug dealing and juvenile crime. Specifically, there is one house on my block (duplex) where the residents deal drugs and have a teenager who is engaged in various crimes (bike cycle theft, porch pirate, stealing from yards, etc.)
 - f. Pontchartrain Park Neighborhood Association/Blighted Lots, Pop-up Car Mechanic Shops (Mendez & Monteguet)
 - g. Illegal business operations, blithe property, parking of commercial vehicles, and speeding.
 - h. People parking abandoned vehicles, junk cars, trash, rv's, trailers, etc. on vacant lots in the neighborhood.
 - i. Lack of regular police presence. I used to see police units cruise up and down the streets in the community several times a day. Now, you won't see one even if you call for assistance.

2. How can the community collaborate with the Police Department to address these issues?

- a. Have more meetings.
- b. Identify the problem and have the issues addressed in the community meeting.
- c. community should call the police non-emergency number.
- d. Offer, or provide cameras.
- e. There's mistrust between the police department and community, which is been built up for years how to change it overnight I don't have the answer.
- f. It's hard to know the best way to collaborate with the police department to address these issues. I've recently been reporting any criminal activity I've seen via crime stoppers and communicating with the NOPD community liaison officer, who has been very responsive.
- g. Need direct contact information, 311 slow, 911 is not always needed. Also, more patrols are needed.
- h. I has learned that many of the illegal business operations are hidden by conducting out of street view and parking on vacant lots.

3. What does the Police Department do well in terms of community engagement? Please provide specific examples.

- a. Coming to the neighborhood association meetings.
- b. Patrols in the community,
- c. Show up at our meetings and respond to our concerns.
- d. I guess this is the first step.
- e. I think our community liaison officer is excellent. However, I only was able to obtain her information after reaching out to my city councilman. NOPD should make more information public -- maybe on its website -- about what the community liaison officer role is and how to contact your community liaison. I think this survey is also a great start re community engagement.
- f. They are supportive of this community, continue attending our meetings. Communication and follow up.
- g. When responding to calls they are professional.
- h. Outside of the association meetings I do not see any police engagement in the community.
- i. Most of the commanders, liaisons & officers are very willing to engage with our neighborhood associations. Many of your meeting times are in the middle of the day when the average citizen is at work.

4. What could the Police Department do better in terms of community engagement? Please provide specific examples.

- a. Attend our community events.
- b. frequent patrols and faster response times...I realize you are undermanned.
- c. Just stop by our neighborhood and engage with our youth, citizens.
- d. I think making the liaison officer's information more public and perhaps hosting more events on crime prevention. Right now, it feels like crime prevention is not top of mind -- we are more focused on responding to crime that has already happened. For example, I've reported the problem house on my street numerous times. The police finally came out when a kid showed up at the house with a guy to shoot someone. Perhaps if the police had already shown a presence with the reports of drug activity and break-ins, this might not have happened.
- e. Please be more visible, vigilant and familiar with the neighbors and neighborhood.
- f. Give SPECIFIC answers when the community asks about incidents that occur in the community. Was it random or was it a crime of known individuals. Put to rest the rumors about crimes that receive a lot of attention.

5. What activities should the Department undertake to improve relationships with youth? Please provide specific examples.

- a. Assist with the development of our Youth Master Plan
- b. increased patrols
- c. They have no opportunities, no places for recreation, no hope, most have no one at home to correct them, no education...it almost seems hopeless. I wish you the best.
- d. Come to one of our outdoor movie nights in June.
- e. This is a hard one. Youth are obviously being recruited to commit crimes. They also take issue with authority. For example, when I confronted a kid that was clearly casing my house, I was told I was tripping, and his mother did nothing when I spoke to her. I think what could be helpful is for the police to drive around a bit more in residential neighborhoods and when they see large groups of kids congregating, the police could engage them. It doesn't have to be confrontational, but it does alert the youth that they are being watched and that there is a police presence.
- f. Engage more with NORD activities. Bring back "Officer Friendly."
- g. Establish youth programs ~ such as Explorer Law Post
- h. Reenact the Office Friendly Program in public schools, taking time to talk with them when time permits.
- i. Community event on some Saturday's, in conjunction w/PPNA to provide food, talks, games, instill pride in doing the right thing...