

MEMORANDUM

TO: Gary Jackson, City Manager 

FROM: William J. Anderson, Chief of Police

VIA: Jeff Richardson, Assistant City Manager

DATE: May 14, 2012

SUBJECT: Asheville Police Department Public Housing Unit Proposal

Please find attached a proposal for the establishment of the Asheville Police Department Public Housing Unit. This proposal is a collaboration between the City of Asheville (Police Department) and the Asheville Housing Authority to create a special unit of sworn officers to provide direct law enforcement services to the eleven (11) public housing communities in the City of Asheville.

The Public Housing Unit would be responsible for criminal enforcement, crime prevention, community policing and enforcement of Housing Authority regulations in public housing. The unit would partner with the Housing Authority and its residents to foster an atmosphere focusing on community policing to create a safe environment and improve the quality of life in public housing, while simultaneously reducing crime. Preliminary discussions have occurred with Gene Bell, Executive Director of the Authority who is supportive of the concept.

Funding for the Public Housing Unit would be by the Authority and grant funding as part of the COPS Hiring Program. It is estimated the Authority would fund 3-4 full-time officers and one (1) sergeant position. Through the COPS Program, five (5) grant funded officers would staff the unit. The total number of officers committed to the Unit would range between 8-9 officers.

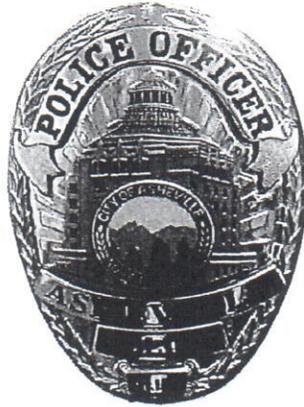
If approved the Department would enter into negotiations with the Authority to finalize an agreement that could be presented to the Asheville Public Safety Committee, if required and City Council for approval. A draft contract and a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) are attached for your review. The contract and MOU are subject to review and approval by the City Attorney's Office.

With your approval, the Department will proceed with further discussions with the Asheville Housing Authority.

WJA/vbr

Asheville Police Department Public Housing Unit

Proposal



- Page 1-3: Proposal and Cost Analysis
 Senior Police Officer Total Compensation Package Worksheet
 Sergeant Total Compensation Package Worksheet
- Page 1-12 Draft Police Services Contract
- Page 1-5 Draft Operational Memorandum of Understanding

(Draft)

Proposal:

Asheville Police Department Public Housing Unit

The eleven (11) public housing communities in the City of Asheville have historically been some of the most challenging areas of the City to police. A combination of social, economic and crime factors cause a high demand for police services and impact the quality of life for the residents of public housing. Currently, the Asheville Housing Authority provides funding for off-duty Asheville Police Officers and Buncombe County Sheriffs Deputies to provide security and law enforcement in public housing areas. These Housing Authority Safety / Security officers patrol the major housing areas seven days a week for approximately 6 hours per day, generally working a combination of day and evening hours. The Housing Authority pays the off-duty officers a contract rate of pay to provide these services and estimates that cost to be \$200, 000 - \$230,000 annually. While the Safety / Security unit concept certainly fulfills the obligation of the Housing Authority to provide a level of protection for its residents, it does not allow for a comprehensive public safety approach, ensuring a high level of police protection and adequate law enforcement response in the public housing communities. Employing a part-time force, while cost effective, creates efficiency and standardization issues. There is a variation of officers with differing departmental policies and protocols, varying degrees of individual training and experience levels, lack of supervision and adherence to discipline and the lack of an overall community safety plan, both immediate and long-term. It also doesn't provide for the integration of the community policing philosophy in the public housing communities.

The Asheville Police Department (APD) has made the public housing communities that fall within the individual police patrol districts, a priority for enforcement and community policing efforts. Currently, the Hillcrest Apartments complex and Pisgah View Apartments complex have the two highest calls for service demands of any community in the City of Asheville. Both complexes also suffer the highest violent crime rates in the City as well. APD staff has formulated and initiated short-term plans to reduce the crime levels in both complexes, as well as integrate the community-policing philosophy and problem-solving measures. These plans were designed to be replicated in any of the other public housing areas or neighborhoods throughout the City if needed. Officers are working 24/7 in each complex, attempting to root-out chronic violators and keep banned persons from entering the communities. Officers are walking foot patrol and communicating with residents to determine what needs they have and gain valuable information in this effort to improve community safety. While these efforts are making great strides in improving the quality of life for the residents in Hillcrest and

Pisgah View, the patrol districts are also tasked with all other calls for service and community needs throughout their districts. A sustained initiative by the patrol districts is not cost effective, due to overtime constraints and will negatively impact the rest of the district over a period of time.

What is proposed in this document is a collaboration and agreement between the Asheville Housing Authority and the City of Asheville Police Department to cost share on a full-time Police Public Housing Unit, which would serve all the public housing communities in the City of Asheville. This Public Housing Unit would consist of a team of Asheville Police Department officers that would be responsible for criminal enforcement, crime prevention, community policing and enforcement of Housing Authority regulations in public housing. The Public Housing Unit would examine calls for service trends, high incident times of day/night, and utilize information from the Housing Authority to determine a work schedule and areas of concentration. The Public Housing Unit would share arrest information with the Housing Authority for the purpose of banning and evicting individuals from the public housing communities. A broad community policing strategy would be formulated with the Housing Authority to foster better lines of communication and improve community relations in public housing. The Public Housing Unit would use structured problem-solving methods to engage in community based problem-solving efforts, as well as organize and participate in youth activities consistent with Police Activities League (PAL) activities.

The Asheville Police Department applied for and secured a COPS Hiring Program grant that is based on crime suppression, gang suppression, community policing and youth engagement in public housing and high crime areas. This COPS Hiring Program grant will allow APD to hire five (5) entry level officers and pay full salary and benefits for three (3) years. The total salary and benefits package for the COPS grant is \$711,255 over three years. As part of this proposal, APD would position (up to) five (5) experienced officers into the Public Housing Unit and utilize the entry level positions for general patrol duties.

Using the funds that the Asheville Housing Authority now spends on their part-time Safety / Security officers, the housing authority could potentially fund 3 – 5 officers toward the full-time Public Housing Unit.

This proposal is consistent with the agreement that currently exists between the Asheville Police Department and the Asheville City Schools. The Asheville City School system pays the full salary and benefits for a School Resource Officer Sergeant and two (2) School Resource Officers to maintain security and act as mentors in the school system. The school system also pays for officers to attend school related training, as well as a yearly bonus at the end of the school year.

The following is a cost analysis and total compensation package worksheet(s) to provide a basis for cost-sharing:

Yearly salary for a Senior Police Officer =	\$36,738.00
Annual benefits for a Senior Police Officer =	\$17,490.60
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Total yearly cost for a Senior Police Officer =	\$54,228.60

(See Total Compensation Package that follows)

Yearly average salary for a Police Sergeant =	\$52,525.60
Annual benefits for a Police Sergeant =	\$20,646.12
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Total yearly cost for a Police Sergeant =	\$73,173.72

(See Total Compensation Package that follows)

Using this formula, the Housing Authority could potentially fund up to four (4) officers at an annual cost of \$216,914.40. Funding a supervisor (Sergeant) and three (3) officers would cost approximately \$235,859.52 annually.

The City's cost for matching the Housing Authority investment with as many as five (5) Senior Police Officers for the Public Housing Unit would cost \$271,143.00 annually. The COPS grant would cover the salary and benefits for the APD officers at entry level, allowing for \$237,085.00 of the \$271,143.00 to be covered by the grant.

Any combination of the above could be created, depending on the available funding from the City or Housing Authority.