



**NOPD CORE OPERATIONS:** A 10-DAY SCAN TO STRENGTHEN OFFICER SAFETY, CRIME FIGHTING, RETENTION AND RECRUITING.

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The City of New Orleans has faced its fair share of challenges. From the devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina, to becoming one of the countries epicenters for COVID 19, the people of New Orleans have been dealt some heavy blows. However, thru perseverance, the citizens of this fair city have been resilient.

The New Orleans Police Department has also faced its fair share of challenges. From the historic high crime rates of the late 1990's/early 2000's, to the corruption scandals that lead to the Consent Decree, N.O.P.D. was also able to persevere and prove to the citizens of New Orleans that they are dedicated to protecting and serving them.

Presently, both the residents of New Orleans and the N.O.P.D. are once again faced with severe challenges. At the time of this report, the murder rate of New Orleans is the highest in the country, twelve times higher than the murder rate of New York City. Violent crime is at alarming levels. Meanwhile, the staffing levels of the New Orleans Police Department are at historical lows. Experienced officers are retiring and resigning at a rate that has reached critical proportions. 105 Officers this year alone have retired or resigned. Since 2019, almost 25% of the commissioned officers have left the agency and have not been replaced.

The world looks to New Orleans for annual 'rites of passion' such as Mardi Gras, the Sugar Bowl, the Essence Music Festival, and endless conventions. In two years, the NFL has selected New Orleans to host the 2025 Super Bowl. Despite the fanfare and pride associated with hosting these events, the image currently being portrayed nationally is that New Orleans is either 'the most dangerous major city in America' or the 'homicide capital of America.'

Action must be taken **NOW** if there is ever a chance to save the city and bring the reputation of being a city where tourists can come to party and celebrate and not become victims. The residents of New Orleans, who rebounded from losing everything from Katrina and started their lives over again, also need and deserve to have a police force that can make them feel safe and be there for them every time they call 911.

After a 10-day evaluation and analysis of the current state of the New Orleans Police Department several areas of focus were identified as being contributing factors that created the current crisis. In addition to identifying these areas, fifty (50) recommendations are included to help address and reverse these issues. While never a guarantee, we are confident that if these recommendations are implemented in a timely fashion, the driving issues that are causing the current crisis can be reversed.

## I. Methodology

The findings of this evaluation were obtained through a 10-day analysis that included, but were not limited to the following: On-site visit to N.O.P.D. Headquarters; on-site visit to District 6; on-site visit to District 7; on-site visit to the New Orleans 911 Center; on-site visit to Real Time Crime Center; observation/ drive thru of neighborhoods in Districts 6, 8, 1, 2 and 7; walkthrough of the French Quarter during both daytime and nighttime; meeting with Superintendent Ferguson; meeting with the Chief of Operations Bureau; meeting with the Chief of Investigations; meeting with the Chief of Public Integrity Bureau; participation/observation of Department's crime MAX meeting; review of individual district's public MAX meetings; meeting with data-analytics team; meeting with NOPD/FBI Task force; random on-street conversations with members of the community; meeting with Senior & Executive Vice President of New Orleans & Company; meetings with various business leaders; meeting with N.O.P.D. Public Information Officer; review of N.O.P.D. social media accounts; meeting with the president of PANO; meeting with the president of the FOP; interview with union captain in charge of recruitment and meeting with the Sheriff of Jefferson Parish.

### A. Staffing/Officer Safety

At its peak, the New Orleans Police Department had a headcount of 1143 commissioned officers. With a workforce that size, the opportunity existed for N.O.P.D. to create specialized positions/units within the department, without hampering its ability to provide adequate 911 response to the residents of New Orleans. That is no longer the case. With less than 950 commissioned officers, it is not uncommon to have a response time approaching three hours for a non-priority 911 call. This is unacceptable to the residents of New Orleans. The simple expectations that the police will arrive when you call them, is not a current reality in New Orleans. Furthermore, the number of officers on patrol has reached critical levels, especially when it comes to officer safety. Officers on patrol need and deserve the simple assurance, that just like the residents they serve, that back-up will also come to them when *THEY* call for it. With attrition and recruitment also at critical levels, the department must move from the specialization model of days past, to an 'everyone must pitch in' model. The re-allocation of commissioned officers to provide patrol support is unavoidable. No one is exempt, regardless of the rank or assignment. Staffing levels on the street must rise to a level in which officers are safe.

**Recommendation:** A total of 212 commissioned officers, currently assigned to non-patrol, special operations and investigative duties will be immediately re-assigned to patrol duties in uniform, in districts. *(See attached proposal for specific recommended re-allocations).*

**Recommendation:** All current officers assigned to specific "Administrative Duties" will immediately be placed on patrol.

**Recommendation:** Each District Captain will evaluate how many officers/cars are necessary to ensure adequate police response in their respective district. They should then develop and institute a permanent deployment protocol known as 'minimum officer deployment.' This evaluation must also include staffing on 12-hour tours, other than the current day and night watch tours. These additional

tours will ensure continuous 911 response. Furthermore, if for any shift these 'minimum officer deployment' requirement cannot be achieved, an immediate notification to Chief of Field Operations will be made and personnel from other enforcement units (Including investigative units) will be re-allocated.

**Recommendation:** Ensure that the *previously existing* two-officer patrol units are operating accordingly in high crime areas. This requirement should not be abandoned to split officers up to provide additional cars on patrol. Officer safety protocols should never be sacrificed in high crime areas.

**Recommendation:** All *Community Liaison Officers* will be allocated to patrol functions. If necessary, a supervisor can perform that function.

**Recommendation:** Department and city attorneys will expeditiously develop "MOU" agreements with the eighteen (18) 'outside' law enforcement agencies (Tulane; Loyola etc..) that currently patrol select areas of New Orleans. This will allow those officers to assist N.O.P.D. and provide police services withing a two-block radius of current boundaries, if N.O.P.D. is unable to provide an expeditious response.

**If after implementing these recommendations the staffing on patrol is still not adequate:**

**Recommendation:** Based on crime data and 911 call volume analysis, District 2 will be temporarily closed with the officers currently assigned will be re-allocated to District 6 & District 1.

## B. Morale/Discipline

Since being placed under the Consent Decree in 2012, the New Orleans Police Department has been under intense scrutiny by outside observers. While necessary to a certain degree, the outside supervision has required officers to spend more time explaining why they had to take specific police actions instead of being able to simply do their job. At times, the burden of this documentation process ultimately affects the ability of the N.O.P.D. to provide adequate police service to the citizens they serve. Recent anti-police rhetoric nationwide has also made it more difficult for officers to do their job. A recent evaluation of the Department's Public Integrity Bureau revealed far-reaching, self-initiated investigations that often resulted in discipline not consistent with the severity of the infraction. In addition to the excessive discipline, a complicated internal promotion process, that modified the already existing civil service promotion process, has created a sense of non-transparency and feelings of nepotism within the rank and file. Finally, the lack of serviceable equipment and deplorable working condition in certain department facilities have created a toxic environment where morale is low. When morale is low, productivity often suffers. The result is separation of experienced and tenured officers from the Department. This cannot continue to be the case.

**Recommendation:** Re-assign the current leadership of the Public Integrity Bureau, who has been in place for twelve years. Management positions, especially at high level, should change every few years to ensure that new ideas and leadership skills are exploited for the benefit of the agency.

**Recommendation:** Develop and create a process in which investigators assigned to the Public Integrity Bureau are often rotated to different assignments, after being assigned to the unit for two years. Such a practice will be beneficial for the agency by mentoring and developing supervisors with extensive knowledge of the internal investigative/discipline process.

**Recommendation:** Re-implement the prior civil service "banding" promotion process with an interview not being a decisive component for advancement.

**Recommendation:** For disciplinary cases requiring a significant penalty, create an independent panel for review that reports exclusively to the Superintendent. Also, all disciplinary hearings should be conducted within 60 days of the formal findings.

**Recommendation:** Assemble a panel to review the current disciplinary matrix.

**Recommendation:** Provide each district captain with a \$1200 credit card, funded by the Police Foundation. The funds will be utilized by the captain to provide support to the officers under his/her command such as breakfast, lunch, BBQ etc.

**Recommendation:** Provide each district captain with an allocation of "Captain's Days" (Vacation Day) to be issued to officers who demonstrate superior dedication or accomplishments.

**Recommendation:** Institute a process in which each district captain will be evaluated for overall district morale every 6 months. Encourage district captains to coordinate district family events, medal days and district outings for members of their command. The overall morale rating will factor into advancement opportunities for each captain.

**Recommendation:** Begin the process of providing 'take-home' vehicles to officers assigned to patrol. Develop an incentive-based distribution plan such as creating an incentive-based plan where the district with the lowest 911 response time or least amount of department vehicle accidents will be the first district to receive the new vehicles. Seniority based distribution is also an option.

### C. Crime Strategy

The eyes of the nation are focused on New Orleans when it comes to crime. Recent national news reports have sounded the alarm that New Orleans is now the homicide capital of the nation. Headlines such as these can be devastating to the tourist and business economies. Recent crime trends, specifically that of carjacking, are being driven by juveniles. Furthermore, an analysis, specifically of the crime of robbery, which is often used as an overall crime barometer, indicates that violent crime is up across most of the city. A perception must be created that residents, tourists, and the business community will be safe in this city. While crime cannot be totally eradicated, the formula already exists, as was demonstrated in the early 2000's. The New Orleans Police Department, with adequate personnel, leadership, and equipment, can reverse these alarming trends. The following recommendations can be evaluated, and if deemed appropriate, assist in this mission:

**Recommendation:** Reallocate resources from all administrative positions and some specialized units to perform patrol functions. Serving the purposes of proactively fighting crime, responding to calls from the public and providing visible patrols will be their new mission.

**Recommendation:** Laser-focused deployment of specialized units such as utilizing VCAIT, Warrants, Intelligence and K-9 to address gun violence, specifically in the most violent districts, while having the flexibility to move collectively to other districts should the need arise.

**Recommendation:** Partnering with the Police Foundation and elected officials to secure additional funding for plate readers and CCTV cameras to be deployed in high-crime areas.

**Recommendation:** Generate a “Top 10 Worst of the Worst” list which includes the most violent offenders who are contributing to crime trends in their respective districts. Share and disseminate this list with all districts, investigative entities, and with the District Attorney, to ensure awareness for prosecution.

**Recommendation:** Perform weekly “joint-operations” with local, state, and/or federal agencies such as parole and probation, focusing on the most violent offenders.

**Recommendation:** Dedicate a specific crime-analyst to monitor social media in real-time, in hopes of identifying possible future acts of violence or criminal gatherings, specifically involving juveniles.

**Recommendation:** Present more cases to the AUSA (to be prosecuted federally). Specifically, gun/narcotic arrests and conspiracy cases. Utilize all available federal entities to address the gun violence.

**Recommendation:** Strategic deployment of Reserve Officers - Deploy forty (40) Reserve Officers exclusively to both the 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Districts, to patrol as high-visibility in predetermined zones.

**Recommendation:** Partner with local non-profits, clergy & other community-based organizations to address Juvenile crimes. I.e., have members committed to respond/speak to juveniles and/or parent/guardians

**Recommendation:** Ensure relentless accountability and follow-up at all MAX meetings.

#### D. Retention/Recruitment

Low morale, nationwide anti-police sentiment and the lack of support from certain elected officials has placed a stigma on the profession of being an officer in the New Orleans Police Department. Many experienced officers, who loved the profession and had no desire to retire, are now retiring. Once an appealing profession, in the current social climate, law enforcement is no longer considered a desirable career. This has created a retention and recruitment crisis for the city of New Orleans. Since 2019, over 300 officers have left the N.O.P.D. Through the first seven months of 2022, over 100 officers have left the agency. This trend, if it continues, will be economically devastating to a city that has already witnessed its fair share of devastation. Making N.O.P.D. a desired place to work again will be difficult, however, it can be accomplished by implementing the following recommendations:

**Recommendation:** Provide no cost health insurance coverage for members.

**Recommendation:** Make overtime pensionable.

**Recommendation:** Review the folders of recently disqualified candidates to determine if the vetting process is too stringent.

**Recommendation:** Develop a program in which residents of New Orleans will be given preferential processing such as additional points on the civil service exam for residency or prior family law-enforcement.

**Recommendation:** Develop a program to re-imburse any financial losses accrued by former N.O.P.D. officers who recently left the organization to work at adjoining law enforcement agencies, should the officer decide to return to N.O.P.D. (Credit in time to pension, equipment reimbursement).

**Recommendation:** Eliminate steps to top-pay for New Orleans residents.

**Recommendation:** Re-imburse relocation expenses for non-Louisiana residents, pending hiring from N.O.P.D.

**Recommendation:** Continue proposed mortgage incentive program for officers (\$65,000).

**Recommendation:** Offer student-debt forgiveness program.

**Recommendation:** Create a police cadet program tailored to the recruitment of New Orleans high school students (Different than Explorer program).

**Recommendation:** Partner with local clergy leaders to announce recruitment efforts at weekly services.

**Recommendation:** Partner with the NFL and the NBA (*New Orleans Saints & Pelicans*) to create police football/basketball league sponsorship, in hopes of developing a recruitment advertising campaign involving these professional sports teams.

## E. Information Technology/ Communication

The ability to quickly obtain and disseminate information is a crucial tool for fighting crime. Advancements in technology have enabled law enforcement agencies to accomplish this with relative ease, albeit a strong IT network must be in place and efficiently utilized to do so. The recent cyber-attack on the city of New Orleans helped identify some vulnerabilities, however it also stressed the need for a robust and secure intra-department network upgrade.

**Recommendation:** Expediently upgrade bandwidth for the Department's network to ensure that information that is only currently available at police headquarters is accessible in districts remotely.

**Recommendation:** Create a centralized database program so officers have immediate access to all department databases (single password/logon).

**Recommendation:** Upgrade/increase computer hardware to allow districts to access CCTV cameras that are only currently viewable at Real Time Crime Center. Also provide new desktop computers to districts.

**Recommendation:** Hire a civilian IT 'LAN coordinator' for each district to identify and perform IT support.

**Recommendation:** Have the Police Foundation partner with cellphone carriers to provide a smart phone to every N.O.P.D. officer.

**Recommendation:** Provide each N.O.P.D. officer with a laptop/Toughbook.

**Recommendation:** Create an email notification group to ensure that critical incident information is distributed department-wide, in a real-time.

## F. Organizational Structure

There is no perfect or universal structural blueprint that a law enforcement agency can follow that will make it perfect. Larger departments implore programs and structures that may vary significantly from the needs of smaller departments. With this vast differential in policing strategies, best practices from one agency can be developed to retrofit specific needs in another agency.

**Recommendation:** Create a Chief of Staff position that is a *commissioned position* reporting to the Superintendent. In the current structure, the second-in-command cannot also be responsible for an entire operational bureau. The Chief of Staff's primary responsibility will be to ensure compliance with the Superintendent's vision.

**Recommendation:** Have RTCC create a timely notifications alert system citywide tailored towards violent crime notifications.

**Recommendation:** Have each district captain Institute a 911 response-time protocol. Under this protocol, the captain will re-direct resources, upon notification from the 911 operations center of a high number of unanswered 911 in their respective districts.

**Recommendation:** Currently, district captains work predominantly business hours (9-5; 8-4). To ensure that continuous executive patrol coverage in the rank of captain is provided, develop a program requiring captains assigned to positions, other than that of district captains, to perform patrol duty (in uniform) on the night watch. This is to ensure that executive district coverage remains 24/7.

**Recommendation:** Re-imagine the social media unit within the Public Information Office. Controlling the narrative across all social media platforms is key for controlling the narrative of the agency. A proactive and aggressive approach displaying all the good work that N.O.P.D. does daily, across all social media platforms (EG gun arrest), is necessary.

**Recommendation:** Establish performance metrics for each bureau. Some examples of this recommendation include:

- Pre-planning for anticipated retirements by routinely analyzing how many officers are in the 'drop' or how many officers have 15 years of service.
- Planning for routine rehabilitation of facilities and equipment by scheduling weekly visits/inspections to department facilities. Partner with Police Foundation to expediate repairs through private contractors.



- Establish preventive maintenance programs for vehicles and equipment.

### **Specific Re-allocation of N.O.P.D. Commissioned Officers**

- District 1 – Permanently re-assign; 3 officers from DIU Person; 4 officers from DIU Property; 1 officer from DIU Staff; and 9 officers from Staff to patrol duties. **Total 17 officers.**
- District 2 – Permanently re-assign; 3 officers from DIU Person; 3 officers from DIU Property; 3 officers from DIU Staff; 2 officers from General Assignments; and 3 officers from Staff to patrol duties. **Total 14 officers.**
- District 3 – Permanently re-assign; 1 officer from DIU Person; 4 officers from DIU Property; 1 officer from DIU Staff; 1 officer from General Assignments and 11 officers from Staff to patrol duties. **Total 18 officers.**
- District 4 – Permanently re-assign; 4 officers from DIU Person; 1 officer from DIU Property; 2 officers from DIU Staff; and 11 officers from Staff to patrol duties. **Total 18 officers.**
- District 5 – Permanently re-assign; 2 officers from DIU Person; 2 officers from DIU Property; 2 officers from DIU Staff; and 5 officers from Staff to patrol duties. **Total 11 officers.**
- District 6 – Permanently re-assign; 2 officers from DIU Property; 3 officers from DIU Staff; 1 officer from General Assignments and 4 officers from Staff to patrol duties. **Total 10 officers.**
- District 7 – Permanently re-assign; 1 officer from DIU Person; 3 officers from DIU Staff; 2 officers from General Assignments and 6 officers from Staff to patrol duties. **Total 12 officers.**
- District 8 – Permanently re-assign; 2 officers from DIU Person; 2 officers from DIU Property; 4 officers from DIU Staff; and 4 officers from Staff to patrol duties. **Total 12 officers.**
- Admin Staff: Permanently assign 5 officers to patrol duties. **Total 5 officers.**
- SOD: Permanently assign 11 Admin officers to patrol duties; Permanently assign 3 motorcycles and 3 K-9 officers to the 7<sup>th</sup> District; Permanently assign 3 motorcycles and 3 K-9 officers to the 5<sup>th</sup> District; Permanently assign 3 motorcycles and 3 K-9 officers to the 1<sup>st</sup> District. Permanently assign 11 Mounted officers to 8<sup>th</sup> District. **Total 40 officers.**

***\*\*\*\* Specialized response to emergencies in other Districts takes precedent, however when on routine patrol, the units will remain in their district of assignment \*\*\*\****

- CID: Permanently assign 6 officers from Cold Case to patrol; 7 officers listed as “other” to patrol; 5 officers listed as Staff to patrol. **Total 18 officers.**
- SID: Permanently assign 1 officer from Admin to patrol duties; 2 officers from Court Liaison to patrol; 3 officers from multi-agency to patrol; 10 officers from “other” to patrol. **Total 16 officers.**
- PIB: Permanently assign 4 officers from Admin to patrol duties; 6 officers from Staff to patrol; **Total 10 officers.**
- Personnel: Permanently assign 3 officers from “other” patrol duties. **Total 3 officers.**
- Rec & ID: Permanently assign 4 officers from Criminal Records to patrol duties; 1 officer from public records to patrol duties; 1 officer from Special Officers to patrol duties. **Total 6 officers.**
- Spt Services: Permanently assign 1 officer from “Other” to patrol duties; 1 officer from Risk Management to patrol duties. **Total 2 officers.**