

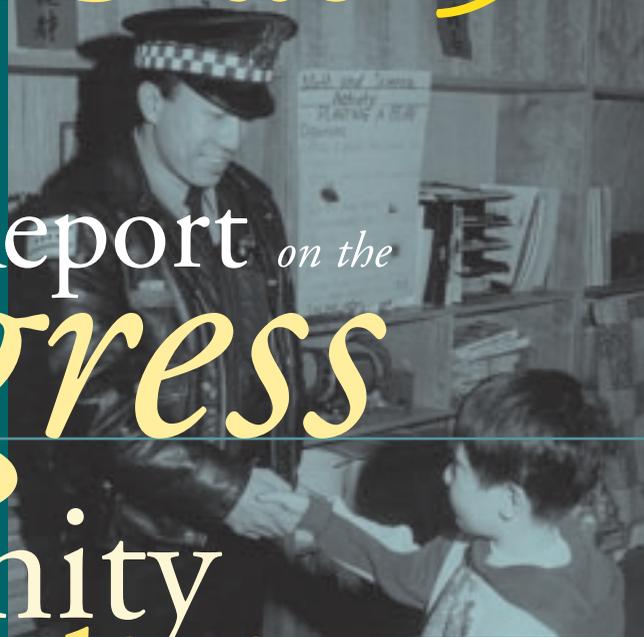
1993-1998



# CAPS at 5

a Report *on the*

# *progress* of Community Policing



in Chicago



# < 1993

## The early 1990s in Chicago.

Crime rates are on the rise—even as more offenders are arrested, convicted and incarcerated. The public is growing increasingly fearful of crime, while the police are increasingly frustrated in their inability to control crime by working alone. Relations between the police and community are strained, and trust is being eroded.

It was time for a change

— it was time for CAPS —

Chicago's Alternative Policing Strategy.

When the City of Chicago initiated its community policing strategy over five years ago, community policing meant different things to different people across the country. Each city began to develop a strategy that met its particular needs and situation.



In Chicago, we realized that the Police Department alone could not address the conditions that can foster crime—the Department needed the assistance of other City departments and the collaboration of residents and other community stakeholders. We developed an ambitious and, I believe, successful strategy that thoroughly involves all three partners in identifying potential sources of crime and in developing strategies to address those conditions.

Never before had such a comprehensive strategy been applied. Through beat meetings and other venues, residents and police officers engage in honest, open conversations about community problems and how to solve them. Various City departments—including Streets and Sanitation, Law, and Buildings—use their expertise to attack graffiti, abandoned or decaying buildings, and other conditions that typically foster crime.

The response has been extraordinary. In the last year, more than 100,000 people have participated in beat meetings, marches, rallies and other community policing activities. Members of block clubs and community organizations representing the heart and soul of Chicago's neighborhoods have embraced the strategy, using their knowledge and skills to make their streets better and safer. And police, now armed with the support and cooperation of people who have made it clear they want to maintain their neighborhoods, are able to do their jobs better than ever. Crime is down for the sixth straight year.

That's not to say the job is done. Our challenge in the next five years will be to continue to build upon our achievements and to expand participation in every neighborhood of the city. I have every confidence we will meet that challenge.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard M. Daley".

Richard M. Daley  
Mayor



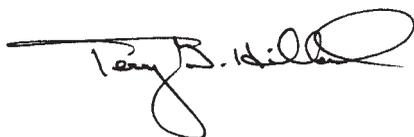
The foundation of community policing in Chicago—that fighting crime is the collective responsibility of the police, residents and other City departments—represents a dramatic shift in law enforcement philosophy. By involving residents and other City departments, the strategy has allowed us to change our neighborhoods so that criminals don't feel welcome. The result is community confidence. Residents know that by becoming active participants, they can make a difference.

In the first five years of CAPS, we have collectively identified actions and strategies that can help heal broken neighborhoods and sustain healthy ones. The strategy is working. But our goal for the next five years is to continue to expand all aspects of that strategy.

While record numbers of Chicagoans participated in community policing activities last year, more need to get involved. We need every block in every neighborhood across the city to get organized and become active. We need to continue to provide training to residents and stakeholders to help them develop effective strategies to deal with crime and disorder problems in their neighborhoods.

And the Chicago Police Department can and will do more to expand and refine community policing. We will continue to enhance training that will give our officers the tools they need to be effective at problem solving. We will expand our community policing strategy throughout the Department—especially to those specialized and investigative units that are so vital in our fight against gangs and drugs. And we will continue to look for creative ways to involve youth more directly in the life of their community.

While this may seem ambitious, I am sure that with the diligence of all the partners in our community policing strategy, we can achieve our goal.



Terry G. Hillard  
Superintendent of Police



# CAPS at Five

## *The Progress of Community Policing in Chicago*

**The early 1990s in Chicago.** Crime rates are on the rise—even as more offenders are arrested, convicted and incarcerated. The public is growing increasingly fearful of crime, while the police are increasingly frustrated in their inability to control crime by working alone. Relations between the police and community are strained, and trust is being eroded.

It was against this backdrop that the Chicago Police Department initiated a bold new experiment in policing in April 1993. It was called CAPS—the Chicago Alternative Policing

Strategy. It was based on a simple premise: if police, residents and other City agencies work together, they can reduce crime. The motto of the new strategy became “Together We Can.” This motto did more than just signify the importance of partnerships to the new policing strategy, “Together We Can” also captured a new spirit of hope and determination in the City’s ability to fight crime and ease residents’ fears.

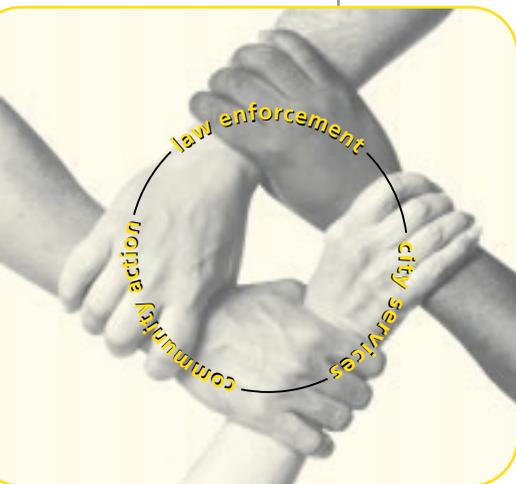
Five years after the CAPS experiment was begun, the signs of success are abundant. Serious crime in Chicago has declined steadily and significantly. The quality of life has improved in one community after another. Conditions that often breed crime—graffiti, abandoned autos and buildings, drug and gang houses, etc.—are being eradicated. A less fearful,

more empowered public has come to recognize the pivotal role it plays in crime control and prevention. And, perhaps most important of all, trust between police and community is being re-established and fortified, as officers and residents work together on solving problems. This new spirit of partnership has been crucial to the success of CAPS and is the solid foundation for continuing to improve neighborhood safety in the future.

This report documents the development of CAPS from 1993 to 1998. It describes the strategy’s key components and early history, and reports on many of the successes of CAPS in addressing the problems of crime, neighborhood disorder and the community’s fear of crime.

**CAPS is an attitude—it’s a belief—  
it’s ordinary people from all walks of  
life doing something extraordinary.**

VALERIE WEISKERCH  
*Rogers Park (24th) District Resident*



# A Bad Block Made Good



**N**ot long ago, the 800 block of North Harding Avenue was one of most crime-ridden blocks in the West Side Harrison (11th) Police District, beset by abandoned buildings, vacant lots and drug and gang activity. But Douglas Bolling, Commander of the 11th District in 1997, was confident that with an alliance of neighbors and police and the creative use of City services, the block could be transformed into a comfortable, safe place to live. So he notified local politicians, financial institutions, neighborhood housing services and community organizations, asking them to join together in elevating an entire block. His vision

resulted in the block being designated the City's first Super Block project.

Corporate neighbors responded enthusiastically, offering financial assistance and human resources. The Government Assistance Program of DePaul University assisted in putting together a strategic plan for the block. Neighborhood Housing Services provided low-interest loans so residents could purchase and improve houses. The physical work began in April 1997. Sidewalks were replaced, trees trimmed and abandoned buildings demolished. A vacant lot was transformed into a landscaped park. Meanwhile, residents started a block club, formed a

partnership with police and organized a neighborhood watch group to pressure drug dealers out of the area.

The strategy worked. Houses were restored, crime was reduced by an astounding 85 percent and public confidence rose. While the 800 block of North Harding is not without problems, it's vastly improved from what it was before residents, police and neighborhood institutions came together and decided enough was enough. Even better, the improvements on the block captured the attention of residents on adjacent blocks, who began using similar techniques to improve their properties and streets. "The people have changed so much, from being uninvolved to being totally involved," says block resident Marty Foster.



# What Is CAPS?

## *Key Elements of the New Strategy*

**CAPS — the Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy** — is a community-oriented philosophy of policing and crime prevention. With CAPS, the police, community and other government agencies work together to identify and solve neighborhood crime and disorder problems. While CAPS shares many of the characteristics of other community policing strategies, it was designed to meet the specific needs of Chicago—both the Police Department and the communities it serves. CAPS was also created to take advantage of the City’s myriad strengths—its strong neighborhood identity, racial and cultural diversity, rich history of community-based organizations, and the efficient delivery of government services.



### *The Strategy is Defined by Four Key Elements*

#### **1. Expanded Police Presence on the Beat**

Chicago is divided into 25 police districts, which are further divided into 279 police beats—small geographic areas to which police officers are assigned. It is at the beat level that the CAPS strategy of partnerships and problem solving has taken hold. With CAPS, new officers were hired, and for the first time, the same officers were assigned to the same beat, on the same shift, for at least one year. Prior to CAPS, officers frequently worked a different beat each day, rotating their shifts every 28 days. A new dispatch policy, implemented in 1993 and 1994, is helping to ensure that officers spend more time on their assigned beats, answering calls for service and working with the community. Rapid response units have been established to answer many of the urgent calls in each district, so beat officers can have the time and flexibility needed to work with residents in addressing longer-range problems. As a result of these changes, officers are developing a deeper understanding of their beats—the people, the problems and the resources available to solve those problems.

**Once you come to a beat meeting, and once you come to a DAC meeting and once you apply some of the things in the principles that are involved in CAPS, and you put them to work on your problems and in your neighborhood, you won't want to stop coming.**

LORETTA JOHNSON  
*Grand Crossing (3rd) District Resident*



# Block by Block, Florence Stoller Leads the Way



**F**lorence Stoller, an Albany Park resident on the City's North Side, could have written the book on grass roots organizing. As a community activist who works with City agencies (especially the Police Department) to improve the quality of life for her neighborhood, she has

a simple but effective approach—reach out to every individual. It's not a quick fix, but the technique works. By going from door to door in the Albany Park (17th) Police District, urging residents to sweep streets, plant flowers or paint a neighbor's fence, she has been the catalyst for

the transformation of entire blocks.

Recently, Stoller started a "welcome wagon" in Beat 1723 to greet new residents and inform them about the neighborhood, CAPS and their beat community meetings. She also chairs the local Housing Committee, which encourages building owners to take an active role in preventing the decay of their properties. For those owners who do not listen, she has organized a group of activists whose efforts resulted in reluctant property owners being brought before Housing Court when such action is warranted.

Her efforts to instill beauty and order on a single block or in an entire neighborhood may not seem like major crime-stopping actions. But experts say such activities send a strong message to criminals that neighbors care about their community and will not tolerate crime. They are important reasons that crime remains low in her community.

## 2. Community Involvement

CAPS provides the community with an unprecedented opportunity to get involved with the police in fighting crime. Beat community meetings are held regularly (usually monthly) on all 279 police beats in the City. These meetings allow community groups, block clubs and individual residents to sit down with their beat officers and other police personnel to discuss neighborhood problems and priorities, and to develop strategies for addressing them. District Advisory Committees have been established in all 25 police districts. These committees advise police commanders on issues as diverse as youth crime, environmental problems and economic development. Court Advocacy groups allow residents to become involved in the criminal justice process by tracking court cases and attending court sessions. Also hundreds of new block clubs, neighborhood watch groups, marches and rallies have been organized by residents committed to neighborhood safety.

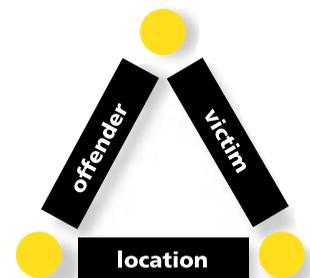


## 3. Support from Other City Agencies

Research shows that graffiti, abandoned vehicles and buildings, malfunctioning street lights, and other signs of neighborhood disorder often lead to more serious crime problems in a community. That's why the City of Chicago made CAPS a top priority for all City agencies, not just the Police Department. Special procedures have been established to allow police to quickly access the services of other City agencies, so that environmental conditions that can invite crime are addressed swiftly and efficiently. Cooperative efforts with the Mayor's Liquor License Commission, the Department of Streets and Sanitation, the Department of Buildings and other agencies are helping to tackle small problems before they turn into bigger crime patterns.

## 4. Proactive Problem Solving

With CAPS, police, community members and other City officials do more than just react to crimes that have already occurred; they work proactively to identify and solve problems of crime and neighborhood disorder. In recent years, both officers and residents have been trained in a simple and effective five-step problem-solving process. Through a device called the "crime triangle," police and community have learned that crime is a three-sided problem which must be tackled from all angles: offenders, victims and locations. Beat plans help the police and community to prioritize problems, analyze their causes, identify strategies, and plan and document problem-solving missions. Using these and other tools, the CAPS partners are helping to reduce crime by solving problems.



**Crime Triangle**  
In Problem Solving, All Three Sides  
of the Triangle Must Be Considered

# Arnold Mireles: His Legacy on the Streets of His South Chicago Neighborhood



**T**he murder of community activist Arnold Mireles across the street from his South Chicago home in December 1997, could have been a stake through the heart of the CAPS Court Advocacy program. That is perhaps that's what his killers had hoped. Mireles, after all, had worked tirelessly to expose slumlords in his neighborhood by documenting their abuses and then showing up in court to back up the community's accusations. He usually had a group of neighbors with him. Together, they were instrumental in getting dozens of dilapidated, unsafe buildings demolished or rehabbed.

"We take witnesses and we take photographs and we tell

the truth," said Mireles in a 1997 interview with *Chicago CrimeWatch*, shortly before he was gunned down at 89th Street and Exchange Avenue. "We confront the owners and attorneys. We get these buildings demolished because we have evidence and truth on our side."

Mireles had hoped to purge his neighborhood of drugs, gangs and dangerous buildings, and restore it to the solid community it was when he was a child growing up there. He was a staunch supporter of Court Advocacy, in which residents appear at significant court cases. Advocates usually don't testify in criminal court, but they do wear identification tags, speak to prosecutors

and generally show concern about crime, and express compassion for victims. Advocates do sometimes testify and provide evidence (such as photographs) in Housing Court.

If his killers—a local slumlord and two gang members were arrested and charged in early 1998—thought that by getting rid of Mireles they would also be rid of critics, they were mistaken. Instead, his death was a catalyst for community involvement. Neighbors, some of whom had never participated in local activities, met at nearby churches to decide how to continue Mireles' community work. "He's irreplaceable," says neighborhood resident Van Bensett. "But a lot of people will be coming forward, and I think Arnold's work is really the beginning of a new way."

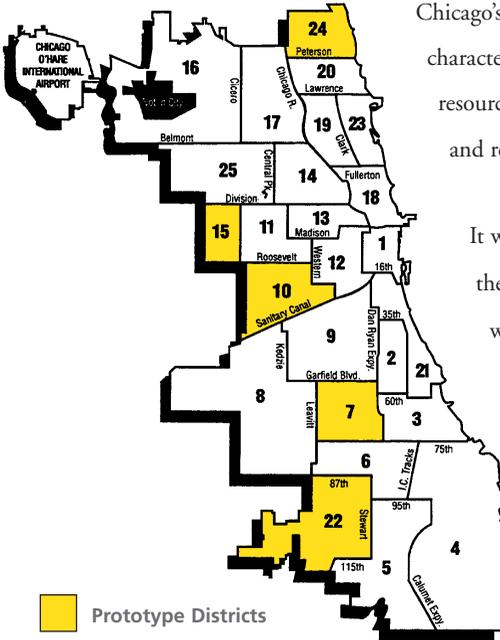


# Getting Started

## *Lessons Learned During the Prototype Implementation*

**CAPS officially rolled out April 29, 1993**, in five of Chicago's 25 police districts.

These five “prototype” districts —Englewood (7th), Marquette (10th), Austin (15th), Morgan Park (22nd) and Rogers Park (24th)—represented a diverse cross-section of Chicago's communities. They had different demographic and socio-economic characteristics, different crime problems and varying levels of community resources. As such, these five districts served as a living laboratory for testing and refining the key elements of the CAPS model.



It was in the prototype districts that “beat integrity”—officers focusing on their assigned beats—was first implemented. Beat community meetings were initiated in the prototype districts, as were District Advisory Committees. New technology and new procedures for accessing City services were also introduced in these districts. The results of early CAPS initiatives were scientifically evaluated by the Chicago Community Policing Evaluation Consortium, consisting of faculty and staff from four major research universities in the Chicago area. The researchers interviewed random samples of residents from the five prototype districts, along with residents from

similar control areas where CAPS had not yet been implemented. They were asked about crime conditions in their neighborhoods just weeks before CAPS officially rolled out, and then were reinterviewed 14 to 17 months later.

### *In Just One Year, the Positive Results of CAPS Were Dramatic* **Major Crime Problems Were Reduced**

In all five prototype districts, residents reported decreases in the major crime problems of robbery, burglary, sexual assault and auto theft/vandalism. Public perceptions were confirmed by reductions in the number of crimes reported in these districts.

**The biggest impact was really in the worst off neighborhoods like Englewood and Austin, where before they started, things like crime and neighborhood decay and relations with the police were the most troubled.**

PROFESSOR WESLEY SKOGAN  
*Institute for Policy Research,  
Northwestern University*



# Businesses Play Key Role in Solving Burglary Problem



**C**APS is a strategy not just for residents and police. Business owners, who are essential to the health of any neighborhood, are an important part of the equation as well. As targets of burglars and robbers, business owners have responded enthusiastically to CAPS. This was evident in the Rogers Park (24th) Police District where, after a handful of businesses along Devon Avenue were burglarized, police and business leaders shared information that eventually led to the arrests of several suspects. Here's how they did it.

During one of their daily meetings with beat officers in their district, tactical officers became aware of a series of rooftop burglaries. They confirmed the burglary pattern through the use of the Police Department's *ICAM* computerized crime mapping system. After interviewing several neighborhood residents and searching the district's database, the officers identified a list of possible offenders.

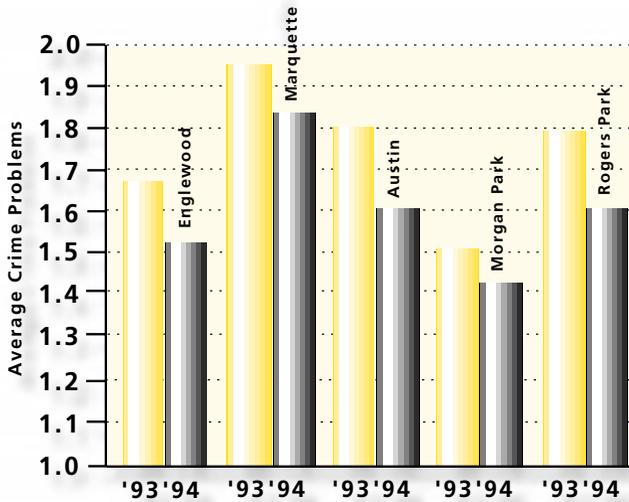
Next, they enlisted the aid of Irving Loundy, vice-president of Devon Bank and a member of the 24th District Advisory

Committee. With his encouragement, several victims of the commercial burglaries came forward and provided information to the police. Five offenders, all street gang members, were subsequently arrested and charged. But the story didn't end there. As the court case began, gang members intimidated some of the victims. Residents of Beat 2413 responded by establishing an escort service for the victims to their cars each night, and the groups attended court hearings with the victims when necessary. That teamwork greatly reduced the victims' fears, allowed the prosecution to proceed and reduced tensions in the neighborhood.



## Drug and Gang Problems Declined

In those prototype districts which began with the largest drug and gang problems, residents reported significant improvements in such problems as street drug dealing and gang-related shootings and violence.



Reduction in Major Crime  
in the Five Prototype Districts

## Neighborhood Problems Were Alleviated

Residents of each of the prototype districts reported improvements in the most serious problems they had identified. In Englewood, for example, the percentage of residents citing abandoned buildings as a major problem declined from 43 percent before CAPS started to 28 percent one year later. In Rogers Park, 25 percent of residents reported robbery and assault as a big problem before CAPS; one year later, the percentage had declined to just 8 percent.

## Perceptions of Police Service Improved

There was a marked increase in optimism about police service in each of the five prototype districts. Improvements were reported in police concern for the community, working with residents, response to calls for service and addressing real problems.

For the most part, these improvements were directly attributable to CAPS. Researchers did not find similar trends in the control area neighborhoods where CAPS had not yet been implemented. Based on the success of CAPS in the prototype districts—both in addressing neighborhood crime problems and in improving police/community relations—the Police Department decided to expand the strategy to the other 20 police districts.



# On the West Side, Men Get Together to Make a Difference



**W**est Side residents, aware that they had some of the busiest drug corners in Chicago, decided to do something about it. "I think it's time for somebody to do something besides talk," says Luther Holt, a Harrison (11th) Police District resident. Holt and some of his neighbors formed the 11th District Men's Club, a group of residents who team up with police to dispense CAPS literature, and to serve as role models for young people. "We hope

that just the presence of the men will combat some of the problems - like drugs, drive-by shootings and robberies - we have in our community," explains Larry Balark, another founding member of the club.

Donning their distinctive bright orange jackets and hats, club members frequently take to the streets, advocating neighborhood involvement and community policing principles. They have become a fixture on West Side blocks

that were previously frequented by drug dealers and gang bangers. Local institutions, including Hartgrove Hospital, Bank of America and the 27th Ward Alderman's office, quickly saw the benefit of residents taking back the streets and lent their support.



# Expanding the CAPS Toolbox

## *The New Policing Strategy Goes Citywide*

**As CAPS was expanded citywide,** the Police Department recognized that additional resources would be needed; not just more personnel, but also new technology, improved team work and planning, and an expanded toolbox for police and residents to use in solving problems. Acquiring and managing these additional resources was a major priority as the entire City embraced the CAPS philosophy.

### **More Officers on the Street**

Because CAPS places a renewed focus on the beat, the City moved quickly to hire and train hundreds of additional uniformed officers to support citywide expansion. Today, Chicago has 1,200 more sworn police officers than it did in 1993, when CAPS began.

Hundreds more officers have been redeployed from administrative duties to the field, with civilian personnel brought in to assume the administrative workload. The result: as CAPS expanded from five

to 25 districts, the Police Department had in place the personnel needed to establish partnerships and problem solving at the beat level, while continuing to efficiently handle emergency calls for service.

### **New Technology for Better Problem Solving**

To be effective problem solvers, Chicago police officers would need new and better mechanisms for collecting and analyzing information at the beat level. They would also need to share that information with their partners in the community. As CAPS expanded citywide, the Police Department rolled out a new, computerized crime analysis system to support neighborhood problem solving.

Known as *ICAM* (*Information Collection for Automated Mapping*), the system allows beat officers and other police personnel to analyze and map crime hot spots, to link these problems with other community factors (such as liquor license establishments or abandoned buildings), and to



**CAPS really provided the tools for a lot of wonderful things to happen.**

POLICE OFFICER JOE COX  
*Town Hall (23rd) Police District*



# Community Involvement Helps Transform a Crime-Ridden Building



In the annals of community policing in Chicago, Ridge Garden Apartments in the 5800 block of North Ridge Avenue is a textbook example of how residents, working with police and other City agencies, turned around a bad situation. In recent years, there was nothing garden-like about Ridge Garden Apartments. It was a physical mess, with faulty wiring, no smoke detectors, a dilapidated porch and broken windows. Even worse, it provided shelter for drug dealers, gamblers and prostitutes. Fires, gunfights and other disturbances were not uncommon. The circumstances didn't sit well with neighbors.

Police in the Foster (20th) District made arrests, and community organizations pleaded with the owner to put the building in order. But the problems persisted. Finally, police and neighborhood residents got together and developed a plan of attack. First, they learned that the Chicago Housing Authority provided Section 8 rental assistance for many tenants. Under community pressure, federal authorities revoked the building's Section 8 funding. Then, through the City's Gang and Drug House Ordinance, the police and the City's Law Department held the owner strictly accountable for the building's condition. "He felt the pressure from the

community, police, fire and Law Department and had to come into compliance," says Assistant Corporation Counsel Sonny MacLachlan. "It was a case of us telling him exactly what to do—clean the place up or get out."

Squatters moved, garbage was cleared away, security lighting and fencing were installed, basement windows boarded up and a maintenance man was hired. The owner was fined \$10,000 for violations at Ridge Garden Apartments (and \$10,000 for each of three other buildings he owned) and ordered to attend CAPS beat meetings. The improvements have energized and empowered the people who made them happen.



obtain detailed information about crimes occurring on their beat. Police officers are sharing ICAM information with the community, and plan to make some of the data available on the Internet in the future. In addition to ICAM, the Police Department has implemented other new technologies to support CAPS: a state-of-the-art 9-1-1 center; increased use of cellular

phones and pagers to support citizen patrols; and a flexible, comprehensive criminal records management system.

### **Teamwork and Planning**

With CAPS has come a new emphasis on teamwork. For the first time, officers assigned to the same beat around the clock have been organized into “beat teams,” where they can interact with one another on a regular basis to share information and discuss problems. Further up the chain of command, teams also have been created at the sector, district and area levels. To ensure these new teams work cooperatively on solving neighborhood crime problems, the Police Department established a comprehensive planning process to be certain that the full resources of the Department are focused on solving the neighborhood crime and disorder problems.



### **The CAPS Toolbox**

With additional personnel, new technology and a systematic planning process in place, the Police Department and the City began expanding the problem-solving tools available to police officers and the community. Some tools—beat meetings, ICAM maps, the City service request process and court advocacy—had been on hand from the early days of CAPS. Since CAPS went citywide, new, more focused tools have been added to the toolbox.

Several of these new tools—the Gang and Drug House Ordinance, Strategic Inspections Task Force, Fast-Track Demolition and Landlord Training—targeted negligent landlords and problem buildings. Other tools focused on problem liquor establishments and outdoor pay phones.

To support community action, new resources were devoted to neighborhood organizing, citizen patrols, parent patrols and safe school zones. These tools are helping police, residents and other City agencies translate the concepts of community policing into action—actions that are building safer neighborhoods.



# Officers Spread the Word— In Spanish—and Listeners Respond



**M**aria Rapacz and Gissella Guerra-Kodatt, officers in the Marquette (10th) Police District on the West Side, practice the principles of community policing on the

streets. But they play another role by promoting CAPS to an audience that goes far beyond the boundaries of their district. Once a month, on radio station WIND-AM, they discuss CAPS and crime

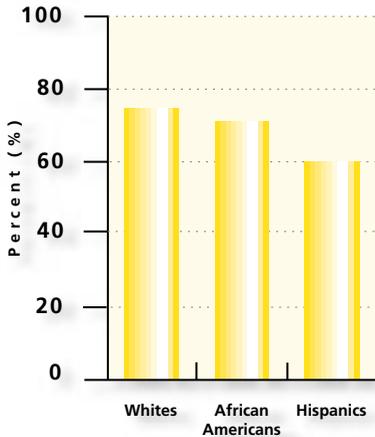
issues important to the Hispanic community. Their Spanish language talk show focuses on issues such as domestic violence, gang awareness, drugs and guns. Additionally, WIND gives the officers air time in emergencies, such as cold and heat alerts, so they can tell the community where to go for help and how to care for themselves during difficult times. “We’re able to do so many things by being on the radio,” says Guerra-Kodatt. “It’s a tremendous thing for the Hispanic community.”



# Spreading the Word about CAPS

## *City Works to Increase Awareness, Participation*

**Even as CAPS was enjoying considerable success**, public recognition of the City's community policing strategy remained low—at just under 33 percent, according to the independent evaluators—one year after CAPS had rolled out. For the Police Department, this finding was a cause for concern. If residents were not aware of CAPS, they could not possibly get involved with the police in fighting crime.



**CAPS Awareness by Ethnic Group  
as of December 1997**

To heighten awareness of community policing, the City embarked on a multi-media, multi-lingual public outreach and information campaign. Traditional marketing communications products were developed, including brochures, newsletters, billboards and transit advertising. A series of television and radio advertisements were created using athletes from the Chicago Bulls, Bears, Cubs and Blackhawks, and air time was purchased to ensure audience reach. A CAPS hotline (312-744-CAPS) was established to handle specific inquiries about beat meetings and other CAPS activities. Many of these products were developed in several languages—English, Spanish, Polish and others. And they all revolved around a common theme—“Safe Neighborhoods Are Everybody’s Business”—that reflects the importance of partnerships to CAPS.

To complement these traditional marketing communications, the Department also turned to new technologies including cable television and the Internet. In April 1994, the Department debuted *Chicago CrimeWatch*, a half-hour program that airs five times each day on the City’s cable television station. Twice a month, a new *CrimeWatch* segment tells the success stories of police, residents and City agencies working together to solve neighborhood crime problems. One year later, in April 1995, Chicago became one of the first police departments in the nation to establish a major presence on the World Wide Web. The CAPS home page ([www.ci.chi.il.us/CommunityPolicing/](http://www.ci.chi.il.us/CommunityPolicing/)) not only provides the community with information

**What’s true on the courts is true on the streets. Chicago neighborhoods are safer because of a new team at work, the CAPS team.**

SCOTTIE PIPPEN, CHICAGO BULLS  
*In 1996 CAPS advertisement*



# Building Skills, Preventing Crime in Public Housing



**W**hen it comes to the problems and the potential of public housing, Michael Tolliver has a unique perspective. As a child, Tolliver grew up in public housing; today, he commands the Police Department's Public Housing Section. "You talk to the residents of public housing and all they talk about is, 'Hey, listen, we don't have anything to do. We don't have a job, and we have no place to go.' They are all excuses which are very real. So we said, 'Hey, we'll bring something to you.'" That "something" is the Family Learning Center, located in

the Robert Taylor Homes in the heart of the City's South Side. The brainchild of Commander Tolliver, the center is equipped with approximately 50 computers for both adults and children. The adults use the computers to prepare for the GED and learn valuable computer skills they can use in the work force. The children have fun playing computer games and improving their reading skills. With the help of DIGEX Incorporated, a Maryland-based national Internet carrier, the Family Learning Center was recently connected to the Internet.

"If this can deter some of the crime, that's what we want to do. Education is the point, and we're willing to help any way we can," says Eugene Davis of the Chicago Housing Authority. The CHA helped by transforming a trash-filled room into a comfortable learning center, complete with work stations and air conditioning. The CHA and the Department of Housing and Urban Development then donated the computers, and Kennedy-King College and the Illinois Institute of Technology agreed to provide instructors. Tolliver also found that many of his police officers are skilled in computer usage and eager to share their knowledge with residents. Says Officer Elaine McKinney, "I think the kids in public housing are special kids, and I think they really need this."



about CAPS, including beat meeting schedules, monthly crime statistics, neighborhood success stories, and more. It also allows the public to communicate with the Department—to report drug activity, register bicycles or volunteer to be a court advocate.

Finally, the City invested in direct community outreach and education. Through the City's CAPS Implementation Office, teams of community organizers are now working in the neighborhoods, encouraging participation in beat meetings, helping to organize block clubs and bringing people together to solve problems. An extensive program of community training

is ongoing. Unlike traditional citizen academies, where residents come to the police to learn about department organization and operations, the Joint Community Police Training project brings the police to the community, training

residents in how to form partnerships and solve problems. This general problem-solving training is complemented by more specific instruction for landlords on how to maintain safe and secure buildings and for residents wanting to know how to address problem liquor establishments in their communities.

The results of these outreach and education efforts have been substantial. Where only about 3 in 10 Chicagoans knew of CAPS in 1994, close to 7 in 10 do today. More important, increased awareness about CAPS has translated into increased public participation in community policing. In 1997, a record number of residents took part in beat community meetings, district advisory committees and court advocacy efforts. Beat meeting attendance topped 64,000 in 1997, an 8 percent increase over the previous year. Close to 5,000 community volunteers tracked more than 3,000 court cases, a 78 percent rise over the number of cases monitored in 1996. Thousands more people participated in neighborhood rallies, marches and seminars to demonstrate their intolerance for crime and their support for CAPS.

## CAPS Website

[www.ci.chi.il.us/CommunityPolicing/](http://www.ci.chi.il.us/CommunityPolicing/)



# Gill Park— Building a Field of Dreams



**G**ang activity, drug dealing, shooting, prostitution—you name it, it was all coming from here—so said a frustrated resident of Chicago's Lakeview community. He was talking about Gill Park, an area that had experienced these problems for years. Parents quit letting their children play there. The physical layout of Gill Park practically invited criminal activity. There were several hidden areas, and an empty, shallow, concrete pool that attracted loitering.

Anyone familiar with this picture of Gill Park would be astonished at Gill Park today.

There is new lighting. The trees have been trimmed. There are beautiful flowers. A foot patrol officer walks the park during strategic hours. Best of all, the secluded areas and concrete pool where so much criminal activity took place are gone. The Chicago Park District

approved neighbors' plans to renovate the park, but the community was responsible for the financing. A fund-raiser was held, at which the Chicago Cubs, whose own ballpark was nearby, donated \$20,000. Additionally, a local architect donated his services and designed a sports field for Gill Park—which now has a true "field of dreams."

Today, sounds of children playing have replaced the sales calls of drug dealers and prostitutes. For those neighbors on Beat 2324 who doubted community policing could work, Gill Park serves as a reminder of what effective partnerships can accomplish.



# The Bottom Line:

## *Crime Down, Neighborhoods Revitalized*

**Increased public awareness of CAPS** and increased community participation in the strategy are important measures of success. But have these changes led to improvements in the bottom-line measures of reducing crime and a community's fear of crime, and improving the

quality of life? Both statistical and anecdotal evidence over the last five years suggests that the answer is a resounding "Yes."

After increasing sharply during the late 1980s and early 1990s, crime in Chicago began to decline steadily and significantly with the advent of CAPS. There were 39,000 fewer victims of serious crime in 1997 than there were in 1992, the year before CAPS started.

Violent crime—including murder, criminal sexual assault, robbery and aggravated assault—declined by 19 percent during this period. Murders were down by nearly one-fifth, with 183 fewer lives lost in 1997 than in 1992. Property crime also declined during the first five years of CAPS. Between 1992 and 1997, burglaries fell by 17 percent and motor

vehicle thefts dropped 25 percent. The number of firearms taken off the City's streets has plummeted from more than 21,000 in 1992 to fewer than 12,300 in 1997. At the same time, the number of arrests by the police has remained constant, at approximately 260,000 a year.

Reduction in Number of Victims  
to Serious Crime  
1992-1997

**-39,000**

**-19%**

Percent Reduction  
in Violent Crimes  
1992-1997

**-17%**

Percent Reduction  
in Burglaries  
1992-1997

With CAPS, neighbors are coming together with police and the City to identify, analyze and solve problems. Through sharing the stories of their successes, the CAPS partners have developed a "community policing toolbox"—tried and true strategies employed by crime fighters throughout the City.

RICHARD M. DALEY,  
*Mayor of Chicago*



# Building a More Educated, Diverse Corps of Officers



**B**eyond hiring more police officers, the Chicago Police Department recognized the need to hire a more educated and diverse corps of officers to support CAPS expansion. The June 1997 police entrance examination was the first in which candidates were required

to have at least two years of college, providing the communications and problem solving skills critical to CAPS. In preparation for this exam, the Police Department assembled a group of current police officers to serve as recruitment ambassadors. These ambassadors visited

colleges and universities, job fairs, community organizations and other institutions. They established a recruitment page on the World Wide Web, and generated extensive coverage of the exam in the news media. The exam attracted the most educated, experienced and diverse pool of applicants ever. Nearly 39 percent were African-American, 39 percent white, 17 percent Latino, and 4 percent Asian and Native American—a near mirror image of the City's racial and ethnic diversity. The Police Department began hiring the top performers from this group in 1998.



# Where Do We Go From Here?

## *The Future of CAPS*

**Five years ago, CAPS started as an experiment** in community policing in a small number of Chicago neighborhoods. Five years later, CAPS is firmly established as the policing model for Chicago...now and for the future.



The last five years have provided a solid foundation on which to build, but there is still a lot more building left to be done. The problems Chicago faces are serious, especially the problems of gangs, guns and drugs. They present tremendous challenges for everyone—police and community alike. But if the last five years have provided any lessons, they have taught us that problems can be solved and crime can be reduced—when police, City agencies and the community work together.

Working together will be the watch-word of community policing in Chicago over the next five years. Working together means getting even more people involved in the CAPS partnership. Today, the average beat meeting attracts approximately 25 participants. For the future, the goal is to have 50. That is twice the people—and twice the ideas and energy—working on solving neighborhood problems. In working to increase the number of people involved in CAPS, the Police Department will focus outreach and education efforts on certain communities where participation has not been as high, including Hispanics, youth and young parents.

Working together also means working smarter, through better information sharing and training. During the first five years of CAPS, the Police Department offered both police officers and community members new and unique training in community policing partnerships and problem solving.

To effectively address the challenges of the next five years, these individuals will need even

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**We talk about the first five years. Let's look at the next five years, the next 10 years. Let's look at every ethnic, every cultural group, every neighborhood, every age range across the City involved in CAPS. That is one of our visions.**

TERRY G. HILLARD  
*Superintendent of Police*



more training, covering a broader range of topics. Information sharing must also be expanded—from the community to the police, and from the police to the community. New technology will continue to be critically important in this area. Expansions of the ICAM crime mapping system and the Department’s community policing Internet site are planned. Finally, working together means working more creatively and effectively.

As this report documents, the Police Department and City have made great strides in the last five years in providing police and community residents with the tools they need to solve problems. And in neighborhoods across the City, the CAPS toolbox has been used successfully to address a wide range of crime problems. But as the challenges facing the City continue to change, the CAPS toolbox must also change to keep up with the times. New tools must be added, tested and implemented, and new people must be recruited, trained and inspired to get involved.



# 1998 >

Over the last five years, the  
people of Chicago—

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police officers, residents and other city workers—  
have demonstrated time and time again the talent,  
the creativity, and the will to make a difference in  
their communities.

The challenge of the next five years  
will be to build on the successes of

“Together We Can”

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# Celebrating Five Years of Chicago Community Policing

law enforcement  
city services  
community action



Chicago Police Department  
Terry G. Hillard, Superintendent



City of Chicago  
Richard M. Daley, Mayor

**312.744.CAPS**

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