



CREATING POSITIVE CHANGE

Northeast Area Command

COMMUNITY POLICING COUNCIL

RECOMMENDATION

DATE SUBMITTED: _____ Seven (7) business days after submission

RECEIPT DUE: _____ Twenty (20) business days after submission

APD RESPONSE DUE: _____ Sixty (60) business days after submission

RATIONALE:

It is our understanding that regular bicycle patrols were discontinued in most area commands due to staffing shortages in 2013. While the bike patrol was disbanded the mounted unit has continued successfully in the face of staffing challenges. We feel a strong case can be made for both of these units acting as the vanguard of proactive, community policing efforts in Albuquerque. Bicycle patrols increase the visibility of officers and “slow down” their patrols. This slowing down can allow officers to learn more about the communities they serve and search out problem spots that may not see adequate attention under a calls-for-service driven patrol system. Bike officers are also able to interact with a different element of the community than vehicle based officers. On a bike, officers can talk to kids playing in their yards, speak with people walking, and also interact with fellow cyclists. These interactions should have two main benefits: 1.

Increased trust and more positive police-community interactions 2. New leads on local crime issues. Bicycle exercise is also highly beneficial to the health of officers and is also likely to boost morale. Being in neighborhoods and interacting with people in a more positive and proactive manner is likely to make officers feel empowered and more immersed in their community. Rather than see a dedicated bike unit we would like to see individual pairs of officers on different shifts in different areas able to volunteer to do periodic bike patrols. These patrols should be relatively unstructured and allow officers to hone their community policing skills in areas they believe need attention. By keeping these patrols unstructured and off of a set schedule the patrols would keep one step ahead of criminal element. We acknowledge that bike patrols are dangerous, not only are cyclists in a vulnerable position on our roads, but a police officer in general is uniquely vulnerable. The supplies, equipment and relative safety of a patrol car are sacrificed for the bike. However given the recent targeting of officers in vehicles and other mediums, clearly no place is 100% safe for an officer and hence we believe the bike patrols, while risky, are no greater risk than any other form of patrol. Given proper training we believe the risk of bike patrols can be mitigated. We recognize that this sort of patrol would pull officers from responding to calls, but this results in a tradeoff allowing more proactive, community policing.

RECOMMENDATION:

We recommend that the department reinstitute bicycle patrols as soon as possible in an effort to increase community policing across all area commands. Such patrols will support constitutional community policing as outlined in the CASA.