

2011 Port St. Lucie Police Department Community Survey



“Building a Partnership with the Community”



2011 Community Survey Final Report



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Professional
Standards Division

Prepared for:
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November 2011

**“Building a Partnership with the
Community”**

Port St. Lucie Police Department

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Introduction

- Chief Reuther and the entire police department are committed to providing responsive programs and high-quality services to the citizens of Port St. Lucie. Involving the community in cooperative efforts, and soliciting community input, provides a source of information that allows a more significant avenue of approach to identifying problems and concerns, exploring solutions, and establishing set priorities.
- In the furtherance of this commitment, in August 2011, the Port St. Lucie Police Department conducted a citizen survey as a means to identify the expectations and opinions of Port St. Lucie residents. This survey was placed on the City's website for the purpose of gaining valuable insight into the expectations and opinions of our citizens. The survey was also placed at the kiosks of the Police Department's Main Station and at the front desk of City Hall. Random citizens were notified through the Police Department's automated telephone notification system as well as on PSL Channel 20, and other media outlets that the survey was available for them to take on-line.

Western Regional Police Station

- The Western Region Station opened in May of 2004 but was closed in August 2010 due to the down turn of the economy. The Police Department could no longer provide the level of services needed to keep the station opened, since 24 Officers were laid-off due to budget constraints.

Introduction

- A total of 92 surveys were returned. The survey measures the public's perception of police performance, programs, services, and neighborhood safety and security in the respondents' own neighborhoods.
- This project was based on the premise that “the essence of police service is public service.” It gives the staff of the police department an opportunity to evaluate what we have done right; what we could do better or differently; and what area(s) of concern are important to our citizens.
- The following report presents a summary of the citywide survey findings. Respondents were asked how they were notified about the survey; thirty-nine (39%) percent were notified thru the City website, forty-one (41%) percent thru the Police Department website, eighteen (18%) thru other means, and two (2%) thru the newspaper.

Executive Summary

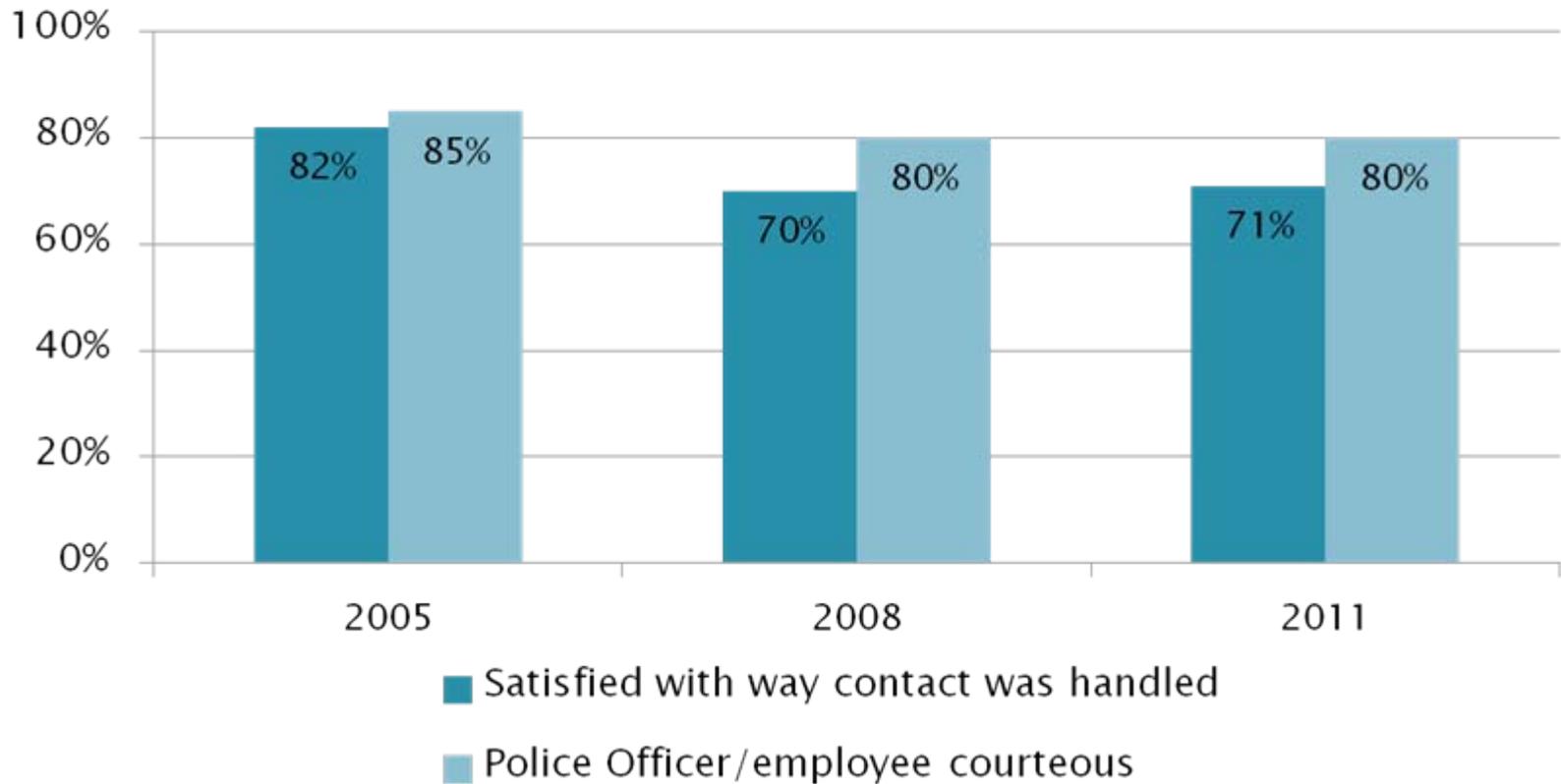
Police Response

- The first section of the survey reflects the Port St. Lucie Police Department's delivery of service– whether citizens were, or were not, satisfied with their contacts with police personnel, and whether police employees were, or were not courteous.
- Of the 92 survey respondents, 74 or (80%) indicated that they had contact with police during the past two years. The nature of the contact of 62 respondents was; forty-two (42%) percent indicated they reported an incident, fifteen (15%) percent they were victims of a crime, six (6%) percent were involved in a vehicle accident, five (5%) percent were a witness to a crime, sixteen (16%) percent requested some information, and thirty-one (31%) reported other nature of contact.
- Of the 59 respondents to being satisfied with the contact made, 42 or (71%) indicated that they were satisfied with the way that contact was handled, and 47 or (81%) indicated that the police officer/employee was courteous.

The chart on page 5 shows a comparison that reflects the opinions from previous surveys.

Police Response

Positive Responses – Contacts with Police Personnel



Programs and Services

- In the second section of the survey, citizens were asked to rank the necessity of 26 specific programs and services– whether they were “very”, “moderately”, “slightly”, or “not” necessary. In ranking the programs and services delivered by the Port St. Lucie Police Department, the survey respondents have consistently rated “Responding to Calls” as being the utmost “very” necessary service.
- Citizens ranked “Patrol of your Neighborhood” as the second priority to the public. “PSL Sex Offender info Access” was ranked third, “Investigations by Detectives” ranked fourth, and “Narcotics Investigations” ranked fifth. The following chart shows a comparison of the top five ranked programs and services from 2005 to 2011. (*see chart on page 7*)

Communication

- We questioned citizens if they visited the Port St. Lucie Police Department’s website at www.pslpd.us and how easy it was to navigate the website. Also, whether they were familiar with the Crimeweb to access/receive information through www.crimereports.com. Of the 62 respondents surveyed, seventy-nine (79%) percent indicated they have visited the website. Of the 49 respondents surveyed, ninety-eight (98%) percent found the website to be easy to navigate. Of the 62 respondents surveyed, fifty-five (55%) percent were aware of the crimeweb for crime reporting.

Top Five Ranked Services

2005		2008		2011	
Responding to Calls	83%	Responding to Calls	88%	Responding to Calls	97%
PSL Sex Offenders	78%	Narcotics Investigations	74%	Patrol of Your Neighborhood	77%
Traffic Enforcement	65%	Investigations by Detectives	71%	PSL Sex Offenders	74%
Investigations by Detectives	64%	PSL Sex Offenders	69%	Investigations by Detectives	73%
Accident Investigations	62%	Patrol of your Neighborhood	68%	Narcotics Investigations	71%

Communication

- We questioned citizens if they were familiar with the Port St. Lucie Police Department's telephone notification system and if so, what was the content of the call. According to the 62 respondents surveyed, sixty-six (66%) percent were aware of the telephone notification system. Of the 41 respondents surveyed, sixty-eight (68%) percent indicated the call was related to crime in neighborhood. Thirty-seven (37%) percent indicated the call was informational. Seven (7%) percent indicated crime was witnessed outside of neighborhood and five (5%) percent indicated other.
- Citizens were asked if they received an automated telephone call on crime information in their neighborhood. Of 62 respondents surveyed, forty-seven (47%) percent indicated they have received an automated telephone call. Of the 29 respondents surveyed, the nature of the calls were eighty-three (83%) percent for crime in neighborhood. Twenty-one (21%) percent was for information & events; seventeen (17%) percent were crime prevention information.

Neighborhood Concerns – Residential Burglaries

- Community Policing involves a partnership between the citizens and their police to identify and resolve neighborhood problems. This survey sought to measure the community's awareness of the Community Policing philosophy, which was implemented in 1992. Due to the lack of response from the surveyed citizens, the information could not be analyzed.

Safety and Security

- The public's perception of how effective the Port St. Lucie Police Department is in deterring crime, resolving problems, and apprehending criminals could not be measured due to "no response data" from the respondents.
- The overall performance of the Port St. Lucie Police Department and the citizen's level of confidence in the department could not be measured due to "no response data" from the respondents.

Neighborhood Concerns

The following questions from the survey (13 thru 38), were not responded by the citizens surveyed, therefore, the data could not be analyzed.

13. What type of service(s) would you like to see offered at the police station?
14. Have you seen any Port St. Lucie Police Department programs offered on the City Community Channel on Cable Television?
15. How do you receive the majority of your information about the Port St. Lucie Police Department?

Neighborhood Concerns Continued...

16. For each of the problems listed, check the box which you believe to be the level of problem in your neighborhood.
17. Please list and rate.
18. If you had to choose one of the listed problems, which would you want to be solved first in your neighborhood?
19. Are you aware of the Police Department's Volunteer Program?
20. Are you familiar with the philosophy of Community Policing involving a partnership between the citizens and the police to identify and solve neighborhood problems?
21. Are you aware of sexual offenders in your neighborhood?
22. If yes, how did you obtain the information?
23. Within the last two years, I think that crime in my neighborhood has:
24. If crime has increased in your neighborhood, what type of crime is it?
25. Within the last two years, my fear of crime and becoming a victim in my neighborhood has:

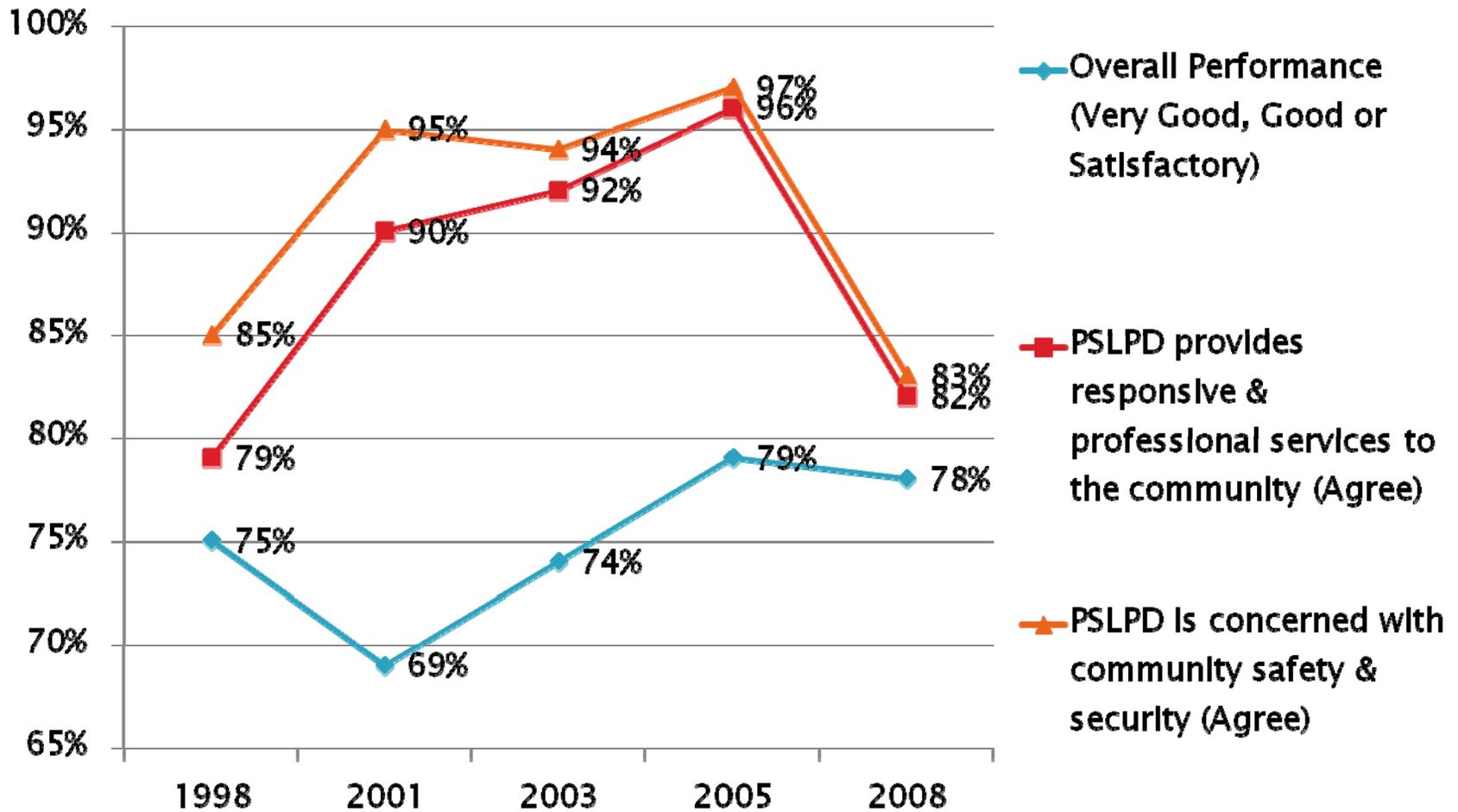
Neighborhood Concerns

Neighborhood Concerns

26. How confident are you about the ability of the Port St. Lucie Police Department to:
(v = very confident, s= somewhat confident, n= not confident)
27. Are you familiar with the philosophy and concept of the Neighborhood Watch Program?
28. In my opinion, the Port St. Lucie Police Department is concerned with the safety and security of the community.
29. In my opinion the Port St. Lucie Police Department provides responsive and professional services to the community.
30. How would you rate the overall performance of the Port St. Lucie Police Department?
31. Age: Optional
32. Race or Ethnic Background: Optional
33. Sex: Optional
34. How long have you lived in Port St. Lucie?
35. How did you learn about the survey?
36. Which of these best describes you?
37. Location of your residence:
38. If survey was completed as a “Business owner”, please indicate the location of your business:

Written comments from the respondents can be found at the end of the report.

Overall Evaluation



No comparable data results for 2011

Population

- The population of the City of Port St. Lucie in 2010 was estimated at approximately 164,603, based on information compiled by the U.S. Census Bureau. Based on quick facts data from the US Census Bureau, the population for the year 2010 compared to the 2000 Census was at 88,769; an increase of 75,834 or 85.4%.

Survey Instrument

- A survey was created using the Justice Survey Software Program, a Web Based Software Program. The contents are divided into six sections: Police Response, Programs and Services, Neighborhood Concerns, Safety and Security, Overall Evaluation and Your Background.

Data Collection

- The survey was placed on the City of Port St. Lucie's website August 1, 2011 and also on the kiosk of the Police Department's Main Station. Surveys were placed at the front desk of City Hall and available to be mailed to citizens upon request.
- The survey respondents had until November 30, 2011 to complete the survey. The survey was then pulled from the City's website by December 5, 2011. Data was compiled from a total of 92 responses.

Data Analysis

- The Justice Survey Software Program automatically tallies, analyzes, and calculates the data. Copies of the report are on file in the Office of Professional Standards, Port St. Lucie Police Department and may be reviewed upon request.

Cost Savings

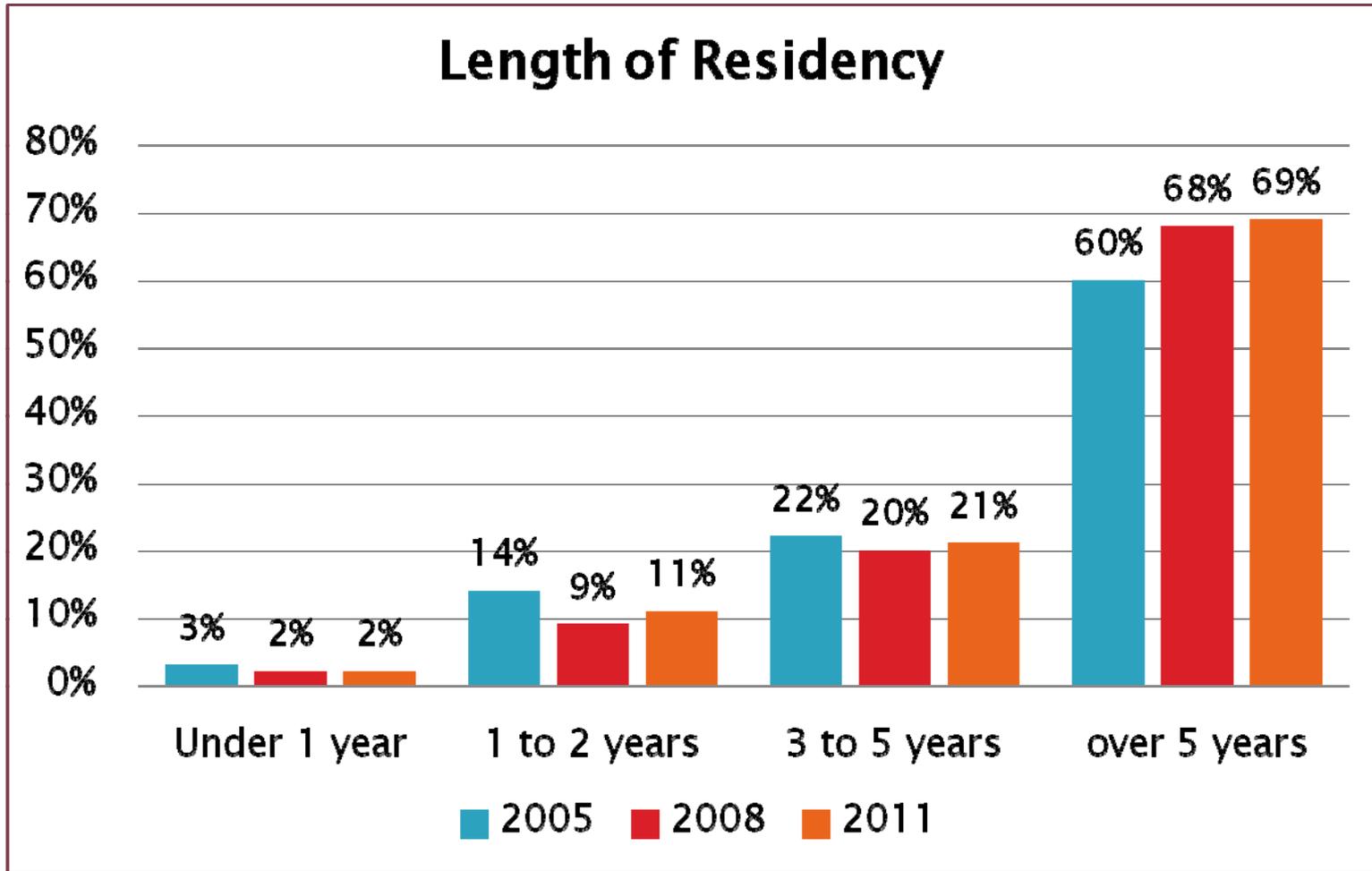
- By utilizing the Justice System Software, the Police Department was able to save approximately \$2,667. This was the cost incurred during the 2005 Citizen Survey between printing and folding, bulk mail services, business reply mail permits and return mail account fee & postage.

Length of Residency

- The average resident is “white”, over 65 years of age, and lived in the same house in Port St. Lucie for one year and over from 2006–2010.

Racial and Ethnic Background – *2010 US Census Bureau*

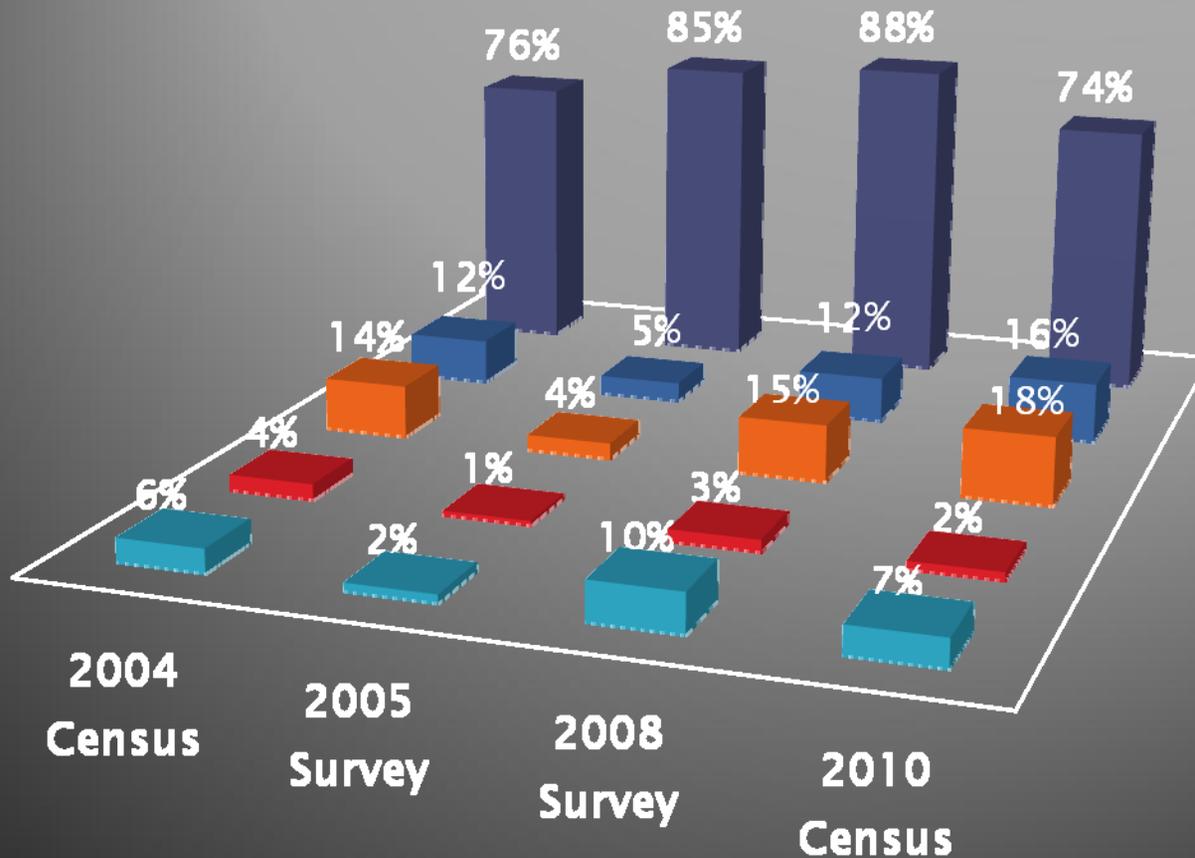
- The ethnic makeup of persons under 5 years, are six (6%) percent; persons under 18 years are twenty-four (24%) percent; and persons 65 years and over are sixteen (16%) percent.



Racial and Ethnic Background



■ Other ■ Asian ■ Hispanic ■ Black ■ White



Respondents Comments, or Suggestions

The following is a list of comments, or suggestions, that were written on the survey– 2011

(Note: Comments have been typed as written on the survey)

- Yeah the police officer should be more concerned from the kids and the issues that are going on here in are towns? What do they really get paid for?
- These officers are not people persons.
- More frequent patrols before and after shift change. I've noticed when the shift change occurs we have several patrol cars on the corner of Gatlin & Rosser. If we could just do patrols during the last 30–45 minutes before shift change this would make a good impression on our department.
- Keep Up The Great Work, Thank You.
- I'm sorry but, this department does not perform any Community Policing. They don't have substations, they don't hold neighborhood meetings and they certainly don't solicit any input from the community.....especially the volunteers. I have been on community patrol for two years and have yet to meet any patrol officers while on the road. They call us names on the radio and quite often ride right by us.
- Keep up the Good Work.
- More patrol and targeting problem areas/houses. PSL seems to be getting worse and that is due to the economy but it doesn't feel safe around here.

Respondents' comments continued...

- If someone is unable to get updates via their phones, I believe it is important to keep the website up-to-date on information/crime going on in the City. This seems to be lacking.
- Port St Lucie is not that the safe city it used to be. I wish to see more patrol officer working the neighborhoods & business at night out there.
- You do a good job. My victim advocate really helped me, I hope you will expand the department.
- I think the Police are doing a great job! The citizens of this community need to be more involved to help the police prevent and solve crimes. Thank you for all your hard work!
- Need more traffic enforcement on our Daytona 500 roadways and more k9 officers to apprehend this criminals after they terrorize our neighborhoods!!! This city is turning into Broward and Palm Beach County. They have real Tac teams, dozens of K9's and huge traffic units to keep up with their demands yet your agency seems to be getting smaller as we get hammered with crime.
- Write tickets on highway instead of our residents.
- Response times are sometimes slow. Other times very slow.

Respondents' comments continued...

- I think that more information should be given to neighborhoods with hot spots or crime sprees as far as updated suspect descriptions, times the crimes take place and precautionary info to make people more aware of their surroundings. Maybe broadcasting these occurrences on the news will keep the public more informed on suspect information which will assist in apprehension or hinder future break-ins. Also broadcasting ways for neighborhoods to easily establish a neighborhood watch program.
- The number of police officers in Port St. Lucie is way below the national average. Staff needs to be increased to maintain a proactive police department and to keep us from becoming like Fort Pierce.
- I think you should hire more young rookie officer's who don't sit around at gas stations all day and do nothing.
- Need more Police Officers on the street and better resources.
- I don't have much to say but this, My Daughter was given a ticket for walking down the side of the road, REALY how about we get some freeking sidewalks and this will not happen...she wouldn't have to walk in the road if we did...The cop was in the wrong but I can't win...
- This city doesn't need a survey it needs an enema.

Conclusion

- ▶ An integral part of the Community Oriented Policing philosophy is acknowledging the value of community input for informed decision making. The application of survey research methods as a means of determining community needs, desires and concerns is evidence of this value.
- ▶ Based on the few comments received from the residents, there seems to be a fairly good rate of satisfaction with the Police Officer's response to the City's needs. It is evident the main concern of most citizens is the lack of safety and Officers staffing issues. They believe the City is not the "Safest City" it used to be. Recommend to hire young rookies who can perform routine patrol in the neighborhoods and business community.
- ▶ Our neighborhood policing methods are continuously reviewed and modified to address the needs and input the community have revealed by this survey. As the department continues to build and strengthen partnerships with our neighborhoods, the solicitation of community input will remain a high priority.
- ▶ With each survey that the Port St. Lucie Police Department conducts, we gain valuable and specific knowledge from the community we continually serve. Our goal continues to be "Excellence in Policing", which we strive to meet in providing quality police services to the citizens of Port St. Lucie.

**This document was prepared by the Professional Standards
Division of the Port St. Lucie Police Department**

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