

Community Focus Statement H: Improve public safety.

Action Statement H.2: Encourage community members to participate in the Citizens on Patrol Program coordinated through the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department.

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Benchmarks: In partnership with the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department, grow and develop a Citizens Patrol in the Hilltop communities, recruit qualified volunteers who meet regularly and provide at least eight volunteer hours per month.

Champion: Volunteer group or person or can be identified by the community

Estimated Cost: Volunteer time.



Members of the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department's Citizens on Patrol program.
Photo Source: San Bernardino County

Community policing is an approach to policing that empowers citizens to find creative, preventive ways to address crimes in their community. It involves building closer ties between law enforcement agencies and the Hilltop communities, and encourages law enforcement to work with community members to be more proactive about preventing crime. Community policing has two critical components: community partnership and problem solving.

In this era of limited budgets in which police departments are expected to do more with less, community partnerships can focus on directing police officers to partner with the community to jointly prioritize and tackle public safety issues that are most important to the community. Forming community partnerships involves law enforcement and the County making an active effort to engage with members of the community, understanding and respecting the views and concerns of the Hilltop communities, keeping lines of communication open between law enforcement and local community members, and helping to provide desired education and training opportunities. Successful partnerships require frequent communication and ongoing efforts to work together to address problems facing neighborhoods.

Problem solving involves understanding the underlying conditions that lead to crimes. This ties into community partnership efforts, using community members as a resource in identifying and resolving conditions that contribute crime. Community policing can provide different problem-solving strategies. Some problem-solving efforts can be as simple as meeting with business owners and homeowners to improve lighting, repairing damaged fences, and improving security measures to make the community feel safer. Typically, this type of problem solving encourages active participation in crime prevention and mitigating issues that increase the likelihood of crime in

neighborhoods. Programs such as neighborhood watch and Citizen Patrol efforts can provide regular forums for communication, support, and resources that can lead to solutions that resolve communities’ public safety concerns.

At this time, the San Bernardino County Sheriff’s Department has dedicated community liaison staff to support community policing by building closer ties with law enforcement and community members.

Action	Action Leader	Timeline	Resources
1. Publicize the existing Citizens Patrol group to neighborhood groups, such as homeowners associations, neighborhood watch programs, or faith-based institutions.	Champion	Years 1 — 3	US Department of Justice Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, The Collaboration Toolkit for Community Organizations Effective Strategies to Partner with Law Enforcement, 2010, revised in 2014 University of California, Berkeley, School of Law, What Works in Community Policing? November 2013 San Bernardino County Sheriff’s Department Citizens on Patrol Program
2. Encourage Hilltop residents who meet the requirements to go through Citizens Patrol training and become active volunteers.	Citizens Patrol volunteers, community groups	Years 1 — 3	
3. Increase visibility of the Citizens Patrol group by holding quarterly workshops, having a presence at community events, and maintaining a Facebook page/email newsletter. Publicize the group in languages commonly spoken in the community.	Citizens Patrol volunteers with support of the San Bernardino County Sheriff’s Department	Years 1 — 3	
4. Hold annual recruitment efforts to provide information and get more volunteers involved in the Citizens Patrol group.	Citizens Patrol volunteers	Annually	
5. Reach out to the Citizens Patrol volunteers to evaluate the program and identify potential improvements.	Citizens Patrol Volunteers with San Bernardino County Sheriff’s Department	Annually	