

1977 POLICE DEPARTMENT ANNUAL REPORT

City of Bellevue, Washington

D.P. Van Blaricom

Chief of Police



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Chief's Message

Mr. R. C. Cushing, Acting City Manager
City of Bellevue, Washington

Dear Mr. Cushing:

The 1977 Annual report of the Bellevue Police Department is submitted herewith and I wish to begin by expressing my appreciation to the City Council for actively supporting their police in our endeavors to maintain high quality service in the City of Bellevue.

After a long period of low administrative priority, in which the police department was allowed to fall farther and farther behind the concurrent growth of our rapidly expanding community, the City Council acted to reverse that trend. Accordingly and after independently examining the fact of the public's demand for police services versus the department's capacity to adequately respond, the City Council authorized a greatly needed personnel increase as a start toward providing resources commensurate with our responsibilities. As a result, the citizens of Bellevue will be better served and that is what we all want!

Although serious crime did increase in 1977 by 1% over the preceding year (as I had previously advised we should expect, because of our diminished ability to respond with too few personnel), there were several gratifying successes that should be noted. First, was that we significantly impacted the priority crimes against persons and the overall crime increase was primarily attributed to crimes against property, for which we had necessarily assigned a lower priority. Second, was that an independent evaluation of our response to juvenile crime over the period of 1974 - 1976 showed a marked increase in positive attitudes toward the police by both arrested juveniles and their parents beginning in 1976 - that fact is consistent with our first full year of operation under the service philosophy of neighborhood/team policing and was described by the evaluator as "... attest(ing) to the highly professional bearing and quality of Bellevue Police Officers". Third, we used the personnel increase that we were granted to further expand our hiring of minority officers and in the 3 years of pursuing an aggressive affirmative action employment policy, the Bellevue Police Department has progressed from no minorities in-service to 21% of our total force. Fourth, and perhaps most significant of all, another year passed without a Bellevue police officer ever having found it necessary to shoot a person in the performance of his or her duties and this in spite of two well-publicized armed confrontations in 1977 that were settled with professional restraint instead of gunfire.

The men and women of the Bellevue Police Department will continue to do their best to enhance public safety in the City of Bellevue during 1978 and they join me in again expressing our thanks to the City Council for their insight into the proven needs of the police to be adequately funded, if they are to perform as expected - I am sure that the public appreciates that too!

D. P. Van Blaricom



Chief of Police



