Data Driven Approaches to Crime and Traffic Safety CASE STUDY

Agency: **Gilbert, Arizona Police Department**

Workshop attended: **Tempe, Arizona, 2011**

DDACTS implementation: **April 2012**

Agency Demographic and Background:

The Gilbert Police Department is located in the southeast valley of the Phoenix metropolitan area. It comprises 63 square miles and in the past, was more of a bedroom community to the greater Phoenix area. Gilbert is currently the 57th (per Wallethub.com) fastest growing community in the nation and economic development has significantly driven a more balanced, vibrant mix of businesses within Gilbert. Gilbert has a large mall, a thriving but small downtown area full of very busy restaurants. In 20 years, Gilbert has grown from 56,000 residents to a current population of 239,931, making Gilbert the 85th largest community in the United States; fifth largest in Arizona (per biggestuscities.com).

The police department is a lean organization, with 240 sworn officers allocated, 1 officer per thousand citizens, and an additional 125 civilian staff. Gilbert is also a flat organization, having a Chief, three commanders (one civilian), nine lieutenants, 28 sergeants, and 200 officers. Gilbert is a low crime city, currently the safest city in Arizona and ranked the second safest city in the United States per UCR data (*Lawstreet Media, 2016*). In 2016, Gilbert PD responded to 70,792 dispatched calls for service and conducted an additional 105,358 officer initiated calls for service.

Lessons Learned:

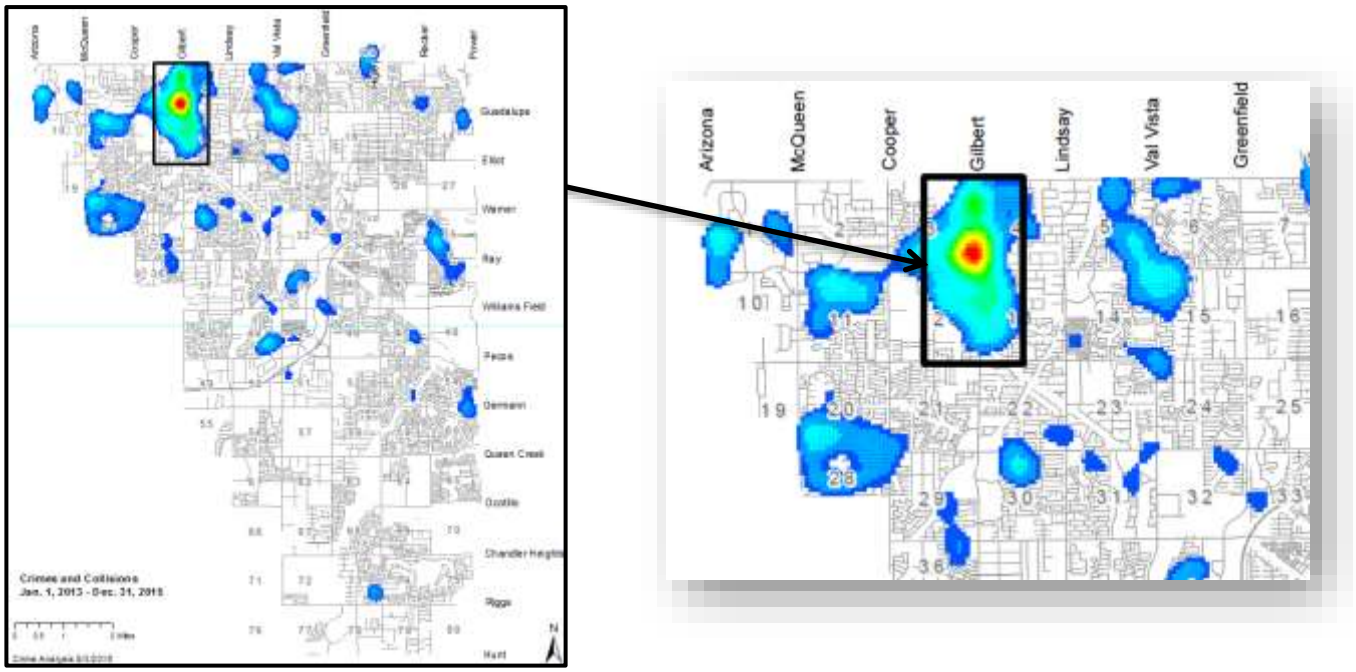
Working with the community is important and a focus in successful DDACTS agencies, however, it is equally important to work with internal stakeholders, such as economic development, city public affairs, code enforcement…etc. Secondly, in the first two DDACTS zones, Gilbert utilized traffic and crime suppression units. However, by including patrol zone officers with those units in DDACTS 3, Gilbert realized greater proactive enforcement over the improvements in DDACTS 1 and 2; 80% increased proactive enforcement. Adding patrol to the model brings greater buy in for the entire department rather than specialized support and we experienced greater performance increases. Thirdly, time to do more than just report about crime but to analyze it is more important in DDACTS meetings and on an ongoing basis. This open line of communication allows for dialogue by those in the trenches with supervisors and management and brings forth intelligence on engineering design issues affecting collisions and other key criminal elements in the zone. This communication strategy occurred in DDACTS 1 and 2 which led to a large scale undercover operation and multiple indictments and arrests. Finally, the focus on all of the seven guiding principles of DDACTS is vital. It requires management focus and a great deal of communication and resource adjustments, but has been a worthwhile model for Gilbert.

Prior to Implementation:

Gilbert PD started utilizing the DDACTS model in 2012 to address higher crime and crash areas through one year operational plans, and have completed DDACTS 1 through 5 currently working through DDACTS Strategy 6. The department created an *Operational Guide* to direct the strategic and tactical plans, management and logistics of the work, within the model, and reported outcomes. Gilbert staff spent significant time communicating with the community partners in the affected work areas. We also created an IOS phone app for obtaining monthly report card results, for the community to have quick access to the data as it evolved month to month, as well as, a quick tip report for crimes and issues observed by the community members in the area.

Pre and Post DDACTS:

Gilbert implemented DDACTS 1 and DDACTS 2 utilizing a three year historical set of crash and crime data for comparison. DDACTS 3 and 4 utilized five-year historical data for comparisons. DDACTS 5 and now 6 utilized three year historical data. Data analysis was conducted for comparison of collisions and focused crimes (violent stranger crime, burglaries, thefts and vehicle crimes.) The areas determined for utilizing the DDACTS model were based on the data specifying the higher, disproportionate crash and crime areas.



In five years of using the DDACTS model, the citizen of Gilbert have experienced the following successes:

- Proactive stops increased 59% in the DDACTS zones compared to historical three and five year averages in the same areas.
- 27% focused crime reductions in the DDACTS zones as compared to the historical averages.
- An increase in total collisions within the DDACTS zones of 22%. Although our crash reduction goals were not met, this is still significant because town-wide collisions increased 30% in the same period. Crashes were 8% less in the DDACTS zones than the remainder of the town, and traffic volumes increased at an even greater rate according to traffic counts.
- 30% increase in onview activity in the DDACTS zones compared to a town-wide 1% reduction. Only a 4% increase in dispatched calls for service in the DDACTS zones compared to a town-wide 6% increase.

The Future:

Based on Gilbert's lean staffing model and the effectiveness of DDACTS thus far, Gilbert PD will continue to utilize the DDACTS model in trying to deal effectively with higher crime and crash focus areas in our city. The model is data driven, which reduces the perception of biased-based policing, and provides for a focus on locations of higher crashes and crimes, as driven by the data analysis. DDACTS 6 is currently underway, and our staff is reviewing data analysis to determine additional needs for a data driven approach elsewhere in our city.