S.A.R.G.

SPRINGFIELD AREA RESOURCE GUIDE

Prepared by Lt. Pat Fogleman
Springfield Police Department
April 9, 2001
for presentation to the
2001 GOLDSTEIN AWARD SELECTION COMMITTEE

Mission

Springfield Police Department

The Springfield Police Department
will work in partnership with the
community to promote open
communication, education,
cooperation, and fair and equal
treatment, to improve the quality
of life, promote unity, encourage
respect, and make Springfield a
safe community.

S.A.R.G.

SPRINGFIELD AREA RESOURCE GUIDE

Summary

The Springfield Police Department has been hosting a Citizen's Police Academy for four years. From the very first class given a group of citizens had formed an alumni association to continue their involvement with the Police Department. In 1999 the Regional Institute for Community Policing became involved in some of the presentations given at the Academy and became associated with the alumni group.

In January 2000 the Regional Institute for Community Policing organized a program called "Responsible Citizenship Through Community Policing" in response to members of the alumni group that wanted to take their involvement with the police department to the next level. A curriculum was developed that expounded on the police function with special attention given to community policing.

During the instruction community disorder was discussed in conjunction with the article "Broken Windows" written by George KeIling in 1982. It was during this class session that many of the people in attendance realized that a lot of the problems in their respective neighborhoods were related to some form of civil disorder but they had no idea of where to turn to receive help with the problem. The Springfield Area Resource Guide was the group's effort to encourage members of the community to become involved in making Springfield a safer and healthier community.

Neighborhood problems and situations were going unaddressed mainly because people did not know that there was an agency available to deal with the situation or how to reach them. People knew to call the police for crime related matters but had no idea how to address disorder problems. Many felt that disorder problems in their neighborhoods where leading to unsafe streets and a diminished quality of life.

Based on what other communities had done with similar situations, the group decided to produce the Springfield Area Resource Guide in response to the need they saw. Not only was the guide produced in hard copy, it was also made available on-line at the Regional Institute of Community Policing web site at http:/lricp.uis.edu. The Guide was presented to the Community in January of 2001 with the initial copies going where the group thought they would be best utilized.

It is too early to tell if the Guide is being widely used. We can say that we are getting requests for more copies than we have and are getting phone calls from organizations that wish to be included in the next edition.

S.A.R.G.

SPRINGFIELD AREA RESOURCE GUIDE

Description

In January 2000, a group of individuals came together to learn about law enforcement and Community Policing. Part of the group were recent graduates of the Springfield Citizen Police Academy while the remaining members were Neighborhood Police Officers (N.P.O.) from the Springfield Police Department. Under the direction of personnel from the Regional Institute for Community Policing (R.I.C.P.), the group learned together and then worked together to produce the resource guide.

The learning started with a program developed by the Regional Institute for Community Policing called, ""Responsible Citizenship Through Community Policing." As the group studied the principles of community policing and problem solving a community problem was identified. Most people did not know where or how to obtain city and social services that were available to them within the community.

The group was originally scheduled to complete this training program in six months, meeting twice a month but, after identifying a problem, and then deciding to work on it together, the group met regularly for a year. It was the group's desire to address this problem to the best of their abilities.

Scanning

During the twice-a-month classes conducted by the R.I.C.P., it became obvious that many people were concerned about the particular problems within their specific neighborhoods. About twenty people on the average participated in the classes and each had a special problem in their neighborhood. Some of the problems included abandoned buildings and vehicles, animal problems, code/zoning violations, environmental situations, health hazards, littering, loitering, noise, traffic problems, homeless people, and crime type problems.

During discussions with N.P.O.'s the people were directed to specific agencies to handle their complaints. In many cases the people were not even aware that there was an agency with responsibility for a particular issue, let alone how to contact that agency.

Most of the problems discussed were on a neighborhood level and ranged from weed and trash problems, to broken street lights and boarded-up buildings. There were too many problems to address each one individually but the group realized that if they had these concerns, they were probably the same concerns that the majority of the citizens in the community were experiencing.

Analysis

It was realized that this had been a problem for quite some time. Most people did not know that they could contact someone about trash accumulation on a neighbor's property, a burned out street light, or report a dangerous building. Many times these problems went without being fixed unless

someone from the appropriate agency stumbled upon it and took action. This caused situations to not be addressed until usually something happened such as a building falling in, rats infesting a neighborhood, or cars receiving damage from potholes.

During discussion amongst the group participants it was Iearned that very few people knew who to contact when presented with a particular situation. The lack of knowledge was so widespread that there were even instances that the participating Neighborhood Police Officers did not know who to contact on some of the neighborhood problems. It became obvious from the discussions that when a particular problem went without being properly addressed, the resulting consequences ranged from an increase in area crime to other things such as decreased property values or personal injury.

Response

To respond to the problem the group discussed everything from doing nothing, to referring everything to the police department, and then to handling the problem themselves. Then someone floated an idea to check and see how other communities were handling the same issue. Several alternatives were investigated and discussed as possible solutions.

The group realized that it could never totally eliminate the problem but knew that they could reduce and deal with the problem better. The final decision of the group was to make available the information so that the majority of the neighborhood problems could be referred to the responsible agency by the people in the neighborhood who were most familiar with the problem. It was felt that a small guide should be produced for distribution and be made available on-line.

The short term goal was to make available a resource guide that people could use to contact somebody with a particular problem. It was hoped that in the long term people would become educated about the services available in the community and continue to use them without having to refer to the guide.

The group decided on a course of action that consisted of dividing into committees, each with a specific responsibility such as finance or production and distribution. The group would meet as a whole and input information into a computer data base for the guide and then it would split up into the individual committees and work on the assigned tasks. The data base was made available to the members while away from the meetings for the input of information for the guide.

The two biggest resources available for the project were the people involved and the resources and staff of the Regional Institute for Community Policing. The Institute supplied the technical expertise and computer systems to produce the guide while the group supplied the bodies and man-hours to do the work. This project could never have been accomplished without the direction and assistance of the Institute.

The group also became its own biggest obstacle at times. It experienced difficulty at times agreeing on what information should be included in the guide or whom it should be distributed to. The members of the group also lack the skills, knowledge, and abilities as a whole to take on a project of this size. A third obstacle encountered during the project was financing the Guide.

It was at these times that staff from R.I.C.P. would step in and change the direction of the group to

put it back on track. Financing was finally located through the Iocal city office of Planning & Economic Development.

Assessment

The group, during committee assignments, had developed a distribution plan which basically had different group members delivering the Guide to various locations that had been identified by the group as a whole. A presentation day was scheduled and arrangements made for dignitaries to be present to introduce and receive the Guide however a misunderstanding with the printer resulted in the Guide not being available for distribution as originally planned. The Guide was finally printed and distributed in the community.

It is thought that the short term goal was met with the production and distribution of the Guide. It is too early to tell at this point but we hope that as people use the Guide and become familiar with it, they will learn who to contact for help with a particular problem. It is hoped that the Guide will reduce and deal with the problems better and more effectively.

A more powerful response could have been accomplished with more money to produce more guides for distribution. We also are planning on continuing the efforts put forth on this guide by updating it and amending it and plan to produce another edition in approximately a year. As the revisions come out, more and more guides will be in circulation.

S.A.R.G.

SPRINGFIELD AREA **RESOURCE GUIDE**

Agency Information

The Springfield Police Department expended very few resources during this project. The Department already had in existence a number of Neighborhood Police Officers that had been trained in Community Policing and Problem Solving. Participation of the officers was voluntarily but highly encouraged by the Department. They had volunteered for their assignments and participation in joint projects such as this is part of their job description.

The N.P.O's had the flexibility to adjust their working schedules and hours and did so that no overtime expenses were incurred by the Department. The citizens that participated were volunteers and donated their time. The staff of the Regional Institute for Community Policing were the project facilitators and this was within their regular scope of work.

Because of this, there were no resources expended outside the Department's operating budget. Financing of the Guide was a problem but that was because it was not included in any agency's operating budget for that year. This will be addressed during the next budget cycle for several of the involved agencies.

For More Information
Please Contact

Pat Fogleman	Linda Drager	Larry Needham
Lieutenant	Deputy Director	President
Springfield Police Department	Regional Institute for	Citizen Police
800 E. Monroe	Community Policing	Academy Alumni Ass.
Springfield, IL. 62701	2930 Montvale Drive	3451 Ridge Avenue
(217)788-8333	Suite B	Springfield, IL. 62702
(217)788-8389 fax	Springfield, IL. 62704	(217)527-1704
PFogleman@cwlp.com	(217)206-6049	L.INEDM@fgi.net
	(217)206-6063 fax	
	ldragl@uis.edu	