



BUDGET CUTS WILL HIT: The Arlington Police Department

The Arlington Police Department (APD) has responsibility for the protection of life and property, the prevention of crime and the preservation of the peace. In the late 90's, the department implemented a series of over twenty management study recommendations to turn the department from one that primarily reacted to crimes to one that was proactive. Research has shown that a proactive approach improves a community's quality of life, property values and economic development. It allows for a partnership to form with the community that addresses smaller crimes including graffiti, vandalism and other minor disorders. The changes included the addition of several targeted programs.

Targeted programs accomplish more than simply patrolling the streets:

- A traffic unit reduces motor vehicle and pedestrian accidents.
- A professional standards unit prevents and investigates police misconduct.
- A community services unit educates community members on crime prevention.
- Dedicated officers tackle drug problems through a combination of preventative work developed with the Department of Health and Human Services and proactive enforcement by full participation in the Middlesex County Drug Task Force.

Without an override, APD will have to:

- ***Eliminate the programs listed above.*** APD will lose the ability to offer proactive services and crime rates will continue to rise. From 2009-2010, the overall crime rate increased by 20% and violent crime increased by about 30%.
- ***Reduce patrol officers on the streets.*** Some shifts will have only 4 officers for the entire town and response time to calls would increase. Staffing only 1.3 officers per 1000 residents is well below the regional average of 2 officers per thousand. Frequently the police chief responds to calls due to lack of staffing.
- ***Eliminate three ranking officers.*** The loss of these officers hinders our ability to maintain accreditations and our participation in statewide task forces targeting drug-related crime. In addition, there are fewer officers available for guidance and training, which increases our overall liability.
- ***Become a reactive police department.*** The department will again become a primarily reactive police force due to loss of manpower.

With an override, the APD can:

- ***Restore three police officers.*** Keeping a Captain, Lieutenant and Sergeant means more officers on the street and managing proactive programs.
- ***Conduct more proactive activities.*** This includes community programs and the ability to write grants that could restore programs we have lost in recent years, such as self-defense training, neighborhood watch and car seat installation and inspection programs.
- ***Improve response time.***
- ***Provide better service to victims of crime and disorder.***

It's up to us. Vote Yes on June 7.