



Reimagining Law Enforcement in Tompkins County

Baseline Examination of Law Enforcement Services

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Prepared for:

Tompkins County and City of Ithaca

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Summary

Demographics

Unlike many mid-sized counties in upstate New York, Tompkins County's population has increased about 10% since 1990 and totaled nearly 104,000 people in 2011-15. Population projections predict no substantial decline in the next 20 years. Every municipality in the county experienced growth between 2000 and 2011-15, but the rates of growth varied. The City of Ithaca's population increased 4.4% during this period, while growth occurred at a faster rate in communities such as the Village of Cayuga Heights (15.8%) and the Town of Caroline (15.4%).

As of 2011-15, 81% of county residents were white, compared to 10% who were Asian, 5% Hispanic and 4% black. Due to the number of colleges and universities in the county, students make up about 12% of the population. The county's median age in 2015 was 30 – the lowest in the state, and another reflection of the significant student population.

Overview of Law Enforcement

A dozen law enforcement agencies operate in Tompkins County, including several campus police departments. These agencies vary widely in size and responsibility, and their jurisdictions sometimes overlap. However, departments generally coordinate and collaborate effectively. This report focuses primarily on six municipal, county and state agencies.

Agency profiles

Cayuga Heights Police Department (CHPD)

This department serves about 3,800 residents, covering about 1.8 square miles. The force includes 5 full-time officers, 9 part-time officers, 1 full-time sergeant and a full-time chief. Many part-time officers are drawn from neighboring agencies, including campus departments for Cornell University and Ithaca College. There is an officer on patrol in the village at all times, based out of a station in the historic Markham Hall. Administrative staff include a full-time clerk and a part-time clerk. The department's 2017 budget is \$1.2 million.

Dryden Village Police Department (DPD)

This agency serves about 2,000 residents, encompassing about 1.7 square miles. The Village Board recently moved to restore the department to 24-hour coverage after budget cuts reduced it to 20 hours in 2015. The department has an authorized force of 4 full-time officers, a full-time chief, a part-time sergeant and up to 8 part-time

officers. Many part-time officers work full-time for other agencies. Administrative staff includes a part-time clerk. The department operates out of an office in the village hall. Its 2017 budget is \$606,600.

Groton Village Police Department (GPD)

This department serves some 2,500 residents in a 1.7 square-mile area. Its force includes 1 full-time officer, 15 part-time officers, a part-time sergeant and a part-time lieutenant. There are daily patrols from 8 a.m. until midnight, and until 2 a.m. on weekends. There is regular turnover in the full-time position as officers accept jobs at other agencies. Part-time officers are typically drawn from other departments. An officer in charge and sergeant handle administrative duties. The department headquarters is in the village fire station. GPD's 2017 budget is \$319,600.

Ithaca Police Department (IPD)

This department serves about 30,600 residents of the City of Ithaca, whose population is estimated to double during workdays. The city encompasses 5.5 square miles. The agency has a budget for 69 officers, most of whom work in road patrol along with six sergeants and three lieutenants. Officers patrol six beats within the city, 24 hours a day. The department is part of a joint SWAT team with the Tompkins County Sheriff's Office and has two canine units as well. A deputy chief is responsible for administration. The department occupies a four-story building along with the City Court. IPD's 2017 budget is \$10.3 million.

Tompkins County Sheriff's Office (TCSO)

In addition to law enforcement, the Sheriff's Office is responsible for operating a jail and serving civil papers. The office also operates a road patrol, airport security and a navigation patrol at Cayuga Lake. An elected sheriff and an appointed undersheriff oversee the office, which has 42 sworn personnel. This includes 23 deputies and 5 sergeants who work in road patrol, overseen by a lieutenant. Staffing levels in the road patrol unit have not changed in 20 years. The office provides 24-hour service in three 8-hour shifts. Deputies also participate in a joint SWAT team with IPD and have canine units. The office operates out of a 1940 building in Lansing, next to the airport, that is somewhat cramped and dated. TCSO's 2017 budget is \$5.9 million.

New York State Police (NYSP)

State troopers operate out of a barracks in Dryden that serves Tompkins, Tioga and Cortland counties. The agency provides law enforcement in areas that lack their own police and supports local law enforcement with additional patrols and specialty services. Patrol staff includes 22 troopers and 5 sergeants, as well as 2 troopers who work out of a substation in Newfield. There also are four investigators and a senior investigator who assist with serious crimes. A captain and lieutenant oversee

operations in Tompkins and neighboring counties. There are typically 2 to 5 troopers on duty, 24 hours a day. The New York State budget funds NYSP operations.

Fiscal analysis

The overall cost of law enforcement in Tompkins County has increased about 8% over the past 4 years. The rise has been relatively consistent for each agency. Personnel drives most local law enforcement spending, with 61% going to direct compensation and 31% to benefits.

Total spending for the five agencies except NYSP totaled \$18.3 million in 2017. Costs per capita and per call varied widely among departments. TCSO and GPD had the lowest costs per capita (\$91 and \$126, respectively), while IPD had the highest (\$338), followed by CHPD (\$308).

Employees of CHPD, DPD, IPD and TCSO are part of collective bargaining agreements. In 2017, salaries for second-year officers range from \$43,450 for DPD to \$76,380 for NYSP. Second-year salaries for the other agencies were all in the upper \$50,000 range. All local agencies pay officers a shift differential for working evening or overnight shifts and participate in the New York State retirement system. However, there are some substantial variations in post-retirement benefits. IPD officers work a 4 days on, 2 off 8.25 hour schedule while other officers work a 5 days on, 2 off 8 hour shift schedule.

	2017 Budget	Cost Per Capita	Population	Cost per 911 Call	2016 911 Call Volume
GPD	\$319,600	\$126	2,536	\$235	1,361
CHPD	\$1,168,236	\$308	3,789	\$931	1,255
IPD	\$10,325,247	\$338	30,565	\$574	17,990
TCSO	\$5,906,049	\$91	64,951	\$556	10,621
DPD*	\$606,600	\$301	2,014	\$426	1,425

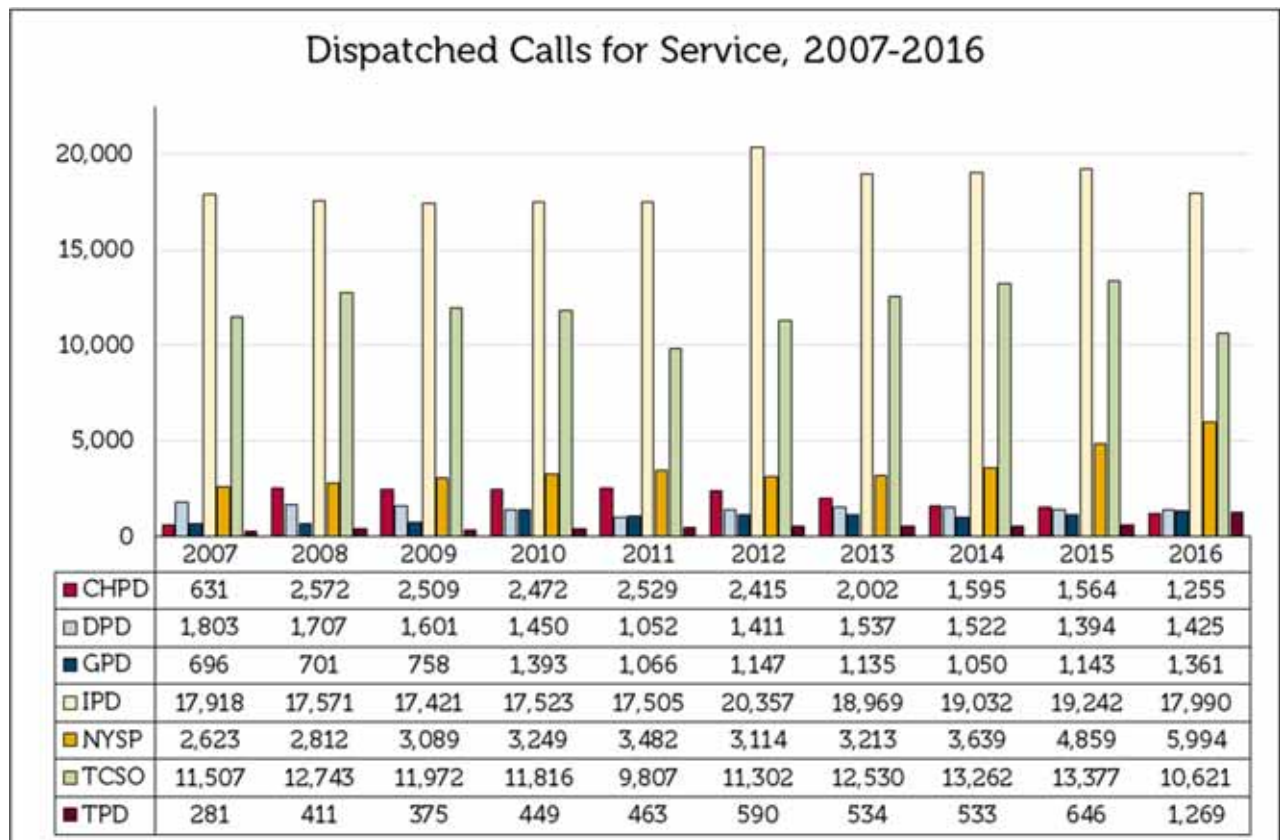
Demand for Law Enforcement

The Tompkins County Emergency 911 and Dispatch Center provided information on demand for services, including both calls from citizens and calls initiated directly by officers.

The general trend has been an overall increase in calls for service over the past 10 years. In terms of call volume, IPD handled nearly 18,000 dispatched calls for service in 2016, or about 45% of all dispatched calls in the county that year. The next busiest agencies in 2016 were TCSO, with about 10,600 dispatched calls (27%), and NYSP, with

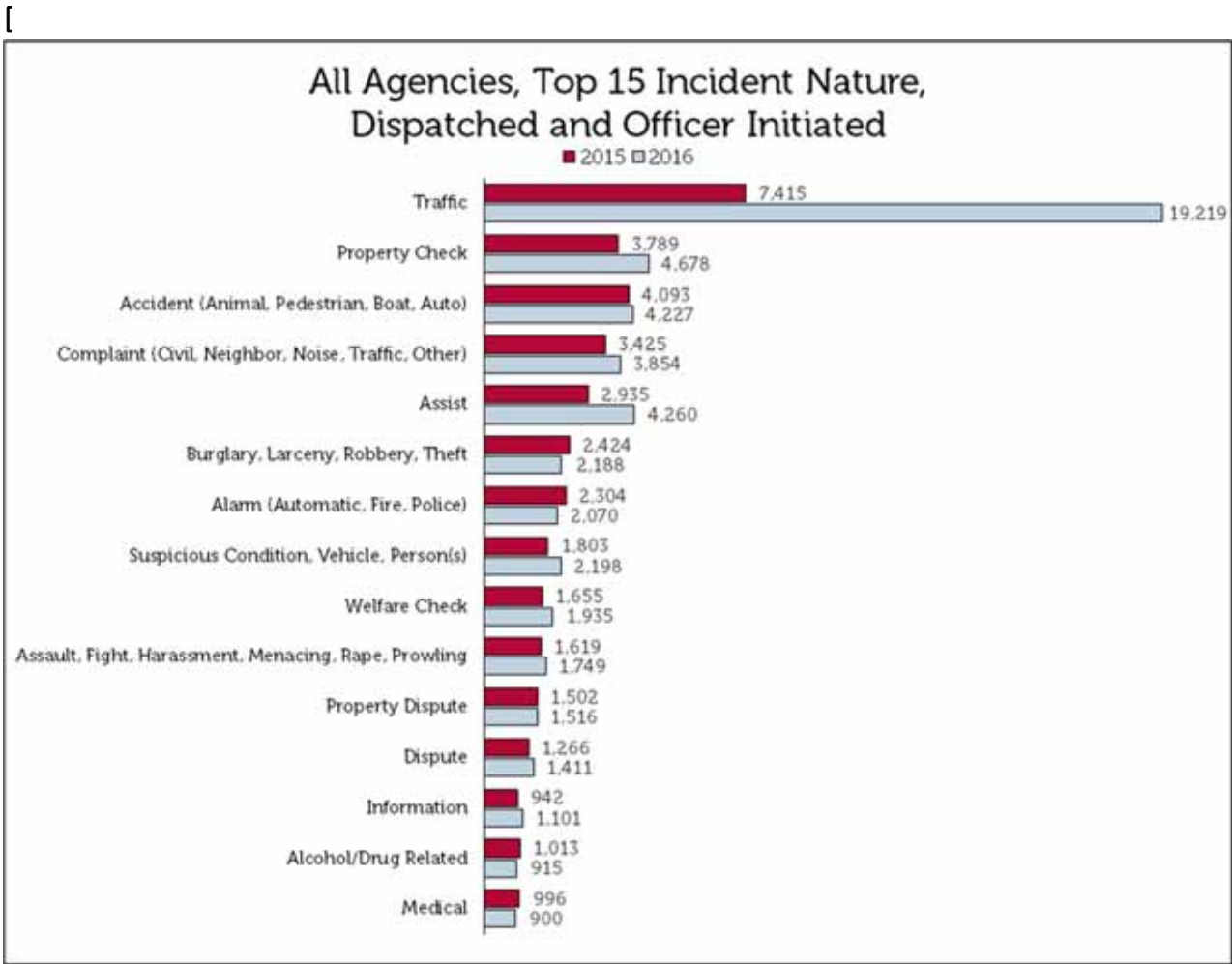
nearly 6,000 (15%). By another measure, IPD and TCSO handled 68% of incidents in the county in 2015-16.

Calls tended to peak during summer months for most agencies in 2016, with the exception of IPD, which saw higher volume in May. Call volumes vary throughout the day, with most agencies busiest in the afternoon or evening.



Nature of Police Activity

Concerns related to traffic enforcement were the most frequent reason for police action in Tompkins County in 2015-16, followed by checks of property, motor vehicle accidents and complaints that required police assistance. However, patterns varied by agency. An apparent spike in traffic incidents from 2015 to 2016 can be explained by a change in how police agencies recorded the data, rather than an actual substantial increase.



Call for Service Time Intervals

The overall median length of time on task interval for all calls in Tompkins County declined from 2015 to 2016, from 29:21 to 21:38.

For dispatched calls only, NYSP and TCSO had the longest response time intervals of 14:52 and 14:12, respectively. GPD had the shortest interval of 4:11. The variation is at least partly a reflection of the geography covered by each agency.

Response Time Intervals, Dispatched Only, 2015-16					
Agency	Median	75th Percentile	90th Percentile	Dispatched Incidents	% of All Incidents
CHPD	00:06:16	00:10:30	00:17:57	753	30%
DPD	00:07:48	00:16:04	00:28:25	1,131	67%
GPD	00:04:11	00:09:57	00:17:41	569	52%
IPD	00:07:53	00:14:44	00:26:26	15,544	73%
NYSP	00:14:52	00:24:16	00:36:14	5,208	45%

Response Time Intervals, Dispatched Only, 2015-16					
TCSO	00:14:12	00:25:09	00:38:40	8,824	70%
Overall	00:10:19	00:19:25	00:32:24	29,988	62%

Note: Incidents reported with greater than 60m response interval excluded in all counts

Overview of Reported Crimes

County Crime Trends

Violent crime rates are low throughout Tompkins County. Ithaca had the highest rate of 1.6 violent crimes per 1,000 residents, compared to a rate of .3 in Cayuga Heights. Over the five years of index crimes reported in the county, 95% were property-related.

County Arrest Trends and Rankings

There has been little variation in the number of arrests in Tompkins County over the past decade. Arrests in the first half of the decade averaged 1,635 per year, compared to 1,685 in the past five years. However, arrests declined 12% from 2014 to a 10-year low in 2016. The county's overall arrest rate and felony arrest rate are among the lowest in New York State.

Felonies have averaged 395 per year since 2012, compared to 374 between 2006 and 2011. Over the past decade, felonies averaged 23% of arrests. Misdemeanors fluctuated more widely, from a decade high of 1,387 in 2012 to a decade low of 1,162 last year.

Misdemeanor drug arrests increased sharply from 2013 to 2016, by 87%. Drug felonies made up 6% of arrests in 2012 and rose to 17% in 2016. Property crimes rose 56% from 2006 to 2015, but dropped 32% last year.

Index Crimes Reported to Police, 5 year average (2011-2015)										
	Index Total	Violent Total	Murder	Rape	Robbery	Aggravated Assault	Property Total	Burglary	Larceny	Motor Vehicle Theft
CHPD	39.2	1.0	0.2	-	0.6	0.2	38.2	8.4	29.8	-
CUPD	251.2	3.6	-	1.4	0.8	1.4	247.6	18.2	228.4	1.0
DPD	73.0	1.8	-	0.2	0.4	1.2	71.2	6.4	63.8	1.0
GPD	54.6	1.8	-	0.6	0.4	0.8	52.8	10.4	41.8	0.6

IPD	1,204.4	50.4	0.2	5.0	20.8	24.4	1,154.0	163.4	972.8	17.8
Ithaca College PD	132.6	0.8	-	0.8	-	-	131.8	3.6	128.2	-
TCSO	498.2	27.2	0.2	5.6	4.0	17.4	471.0	105.4	354.8	10.8
NYSP	284.4	24.0	-	7.4	3.0	13.6	260.4	63.4	189.6	7.4
Total	2,537.6	110.6	0.6	21.0	30.0	59.0	2,427.0	379.2	2,009.2	38.6

Community Engagement

Aspects of the public outreach plan included a website (www.cgr.org/TompkinsLESS), a public kickoff meeting to outline the report process, a survey for residents and several focus groups for key stakeholder groups.

Public Survey

A Survey Monkey poll about law enforcement services received 979 responses. More than 60% of respondents said they were satisfied or very satisfied with the level of law enforcement provided at their homes. In Cayuga Heights, 76% of residents were very satisfied, while there were larger percentages of “neutral” responses in Ithaca, Dryden and the county outside the city and villages.

Nearly three-quarters of respondents said their community is either safe or very safe, and 55% felt that law enforcement coverage is sufficient for the taxes they pay.

Crime response ranked highest among respondents’ concerns about law enforcement, followed by drug-related issues. Seventy percent of respondents reacted neutrally or disagreed with the sentence “I do not want to see any changes in current law enforcement services,” suggesting there is some appetite for change.

Key Findings

The following findings are based on information gathered through CGR’s research, data analysis and public outreach.

- Tompkins County residents generally support and are pleased with their law enforcement agencies.
- Examples of existing cooperation and coordination among law enforcement agencies includes a unified dispatch center, a common records management system, regular meetings of agency leaders, joint operations and shared training.

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- Overall law enforcement costs have increased about 8% over the past 4 years.
 - The second-year officer salary for CHPD, IPD and TCSO is similar. DPD and Groton pay substantially less. For more senior officers, pay rates vary substantially among the agencies with CHPD having the highest top salary for an officer.
 - The total cost of local law enforcement in the county is about \$18.3 million, 92% of which goes to salaries and benefits.
 - While officer activities vary greatly in the county, a high priority is placed by all agencies on traffic enforcement. In the villages, property checks are also a high priority.
 - There are just over 100 dispatched police incidents daily in Tompkins County. Nearly half (47%) are in Ithaca, 27% were handled by TCSO and 16% by NYSP. Each village handled 3% to 4% of the call volume.
 - The village police departments respond outside their boundaries on almost a daily basis to assist TCSO and NYSP with either back up or initial response to a serious call. TCSO and NYSP also frequently provide back up to the village departments on serious calls.
 - The long-term trend of reported crime in the county has been steady, although drug crimes have increased in the last two years.
 - The number of arrests per 10,000 residents in the county is relatively low compared to the rest of New York state counties.
 - Survey results indicate that 58% of residents are satisfied or very satisfied with the law enforcement officers in the community they work.
 - More than 60% of respondents are satisfied or very satisfied with the law enforcement in the community they live.
 - More than 70% of those surveyed believe that their community is safe or very safe. Less than 10% felt unsafe or very unsafe.

- Response to reported crime and drug issues were the two highest priorities for police activity.
- Each agency has independent structures to manage operations such as training, policy development, investigations, scheduling, and fleet maintenance.
- The community expectations, as perceived by elected leaders and agency leadership, are generally consistent and supportive of high levels of law enforcement presence. However, there is a concern about the need to be fiscally responsible.