2008 Assessment of the Duluth Police Department

The Mission of the Duluth Police Department is to provide the highest level of service through partnerships and problem solving in a professional, ethical, and timely manner.

THE CITY OF DULUTH MINNESOTA

Brief Analysis of the current state of operations of the Department

The Department focuses on achieving and sustaining excellent customer service by demanding responsibility and accountability from personnel for successful problem solving outcomes. The Department strives to develop new community partnerships daily and enjoys tremendous community support. The Department focuses its efforts on our mission statement. ***The Mission of the Duluth Police Department is to provide the highest level of service through partnerships and problem solving in a professional, ethical, and timely manner.***

The department motto is ***"Innovation in Policing."***

The Duluth Police Department has a young, ambitious, energetic workforce that is educated and skilled. The average age of our sworn staff is 34 years of age and the average age of our patrol officers is 29. The Department has had a major turnover in command staff. We recently promoted six new lieutenants to guide, mentor and develop staff. These lieutenants focus on quality control and developing a culture of accountability.

The Department maintains safe neighborhoods despite significant increases in demand for calls for service. In 1984, the Department answered approximately 38,326 calls for service with 130 officers. In 2007 the Department answered 76,539 calls for service with 137 officers. With the demand for service being met by nearly the same number of staff, the Department has reached capacity in delivering police services.

The Department has been very proficient and successful resolving many high profile crimes in the past year. Excellent patrol response and skilled and devoted investigative and support staff have gathered the necessary evidence at scenes to lead to the successful arrest and prosecution of those offenders who cause community concern. These arrests allow citizens peace of mind and inspire community confidence in the Department.

SWOT Analysis of the Duluth Police Department

- **Internal Analysis:** Strengths and Weaknesses
- **External Analysis:** Opportunities and Threats.

Internal Analysis: Strengths and Weaknesses

Considerations: Culture, mission, values, image, organizational structure, key staff, position on experience curve, operational efficiency, operational capacity, financial resources, assets, personnel, morale, commitment, leadership communications, loss of key staff, others.

Strengths	Weaknesses
• Committed, dedicated, and professional staff both sworn and civilian • Strong partnerships (P.A.V.S.A., D.A.I.P., Safe Haven, ISD 709, N.H.S., LISC, etc.) • Police Department manual revised in its entirety to today's current best practices • Clear mission statement to guide the Department • Professional public image (Recent community survey results forthcoming in the days ahead) • Established and proven training program for new officers, police trainers and new drug crime investigators • New testing process for police officer position, and thorough background investigations for officer candidates • One of the highest officer retention rates for a department our size in the country • Leadership not only by formal leaders but informal leaders • Young, ambitious, energetic work force eager to learn and improve • New Employee Development Assessment to improve performance and professional development • Highly skilled and trained personnel • Diverse work force with focus on recruitment opportunities to further diversity • Crime/ problem solving is focus of our mission statement • Better communications of expectations • Increase accountability, expectations with a consistent message of ideology, mission and application • Strong allegiance to the community and department • Excellent working relationships with other local, state and federal law enforcement • Increased leadership to further the Department mission with the promotion of six new lieutenants • Technological upgrades in vehicles and equipment which allow efficiency • Improved planning instead of just responding to critical needs • Excellent community support • Increased community involvement in citizen patrols and block watches	• Police headquarters old, out-dated, lacks adequate space and is not secure • Inadequate training budget (most of the training budget buys ammunition for mandated firearms training) • Currently have 7 unfilled investigator positions and 3 unfilled patrol positions • Inability to reach authorized staffing levels due in part to lengthy hiring process and inability to hire for projected vacancies • Difficulty recruiting minority • Civilian staffing has increased slightly (15 in 1984 to 18 in 2008) but, call load has doubled (38,326 in 1984 to 76,539 in 2007.) • Unable to actively seek new grant opportunities and to track and report our current grants due to staffing levels. (proposed grant manager position should alleviate) • New records systems requires training • Must continue to improve intra-department communications between policing areas and divisions, Patrol vs. Investigations • Misinterpretations of equality of work loads between patrol and investigative divisions • Budget does not support operations for adequate project overtime, training or equipment. • Lack of training opportunities due to lack of funds, time, staffing • Informal leaders/ dissidents • Need for addition sworn and civilian staff • Need to reinstate the Police Enrichment Program and allow for better rotation of assignment to develop staff. • Patrol driven Information and intelligence gathering or disseminating • No police information officer to communicate a consistent message with the community via media • Little to no capitol investment to increase technology

External Analysis: Opportunities and Threats

Considerations: Customer service and perception of Department, partnerships, technology, social changes, political environment, economic factors, obstacles, vulnerabilities, insurmountable weaknesses, sustainability of responsibilities, others.

Opportunities	Threats
• Shared/consolidated services with St. Louis County (C.S.I., crime lab, evidence storage, records) • Re-establish the juvenile bureau to effect change on youth • Field based reporting (ticket writer) • Administrative parking fines • Regional training center with an opportunity to utilize the new West Station • Expand desk hours to provide better customer service • Technology upgrades in document scanning, electronic warrant requests, digital recording • Establishing a workable citizen's review process for dealing with police complaints • Further diversify the Department work force by working with our minority partners and actively recruit minority candidates • Strong community support to allow the Department to increase funding, staffing and upgrade facilities • Opportunity to educate the public everyday in crime prevention, target hardening • Expanded recruitment efforts to attract candidates outside the region • Continued exploration of technologies to maximize efficiency (cameras, crime view, field based reporting) • Re-inventing the Department culture, image, business practices, and professionalism • Leveraging other community partners/resources private and public, non-profit for greater problem solving • Build a better relationship with the county attorney's office • Technological advances available to aid in operations • Examine opportunities to partner with additional local, state and federal law enforcement	• Building security is severely lacking compared with modern police facilities • Limited overtime budget is setting us up for failure to staff, train or provide the level of service we are committed to providing • No computer crimes unit to handle to proliferation of today's computer crime • Turn over of newer officers leaving the Department for other law enforcement agencies • Staffing has not kept pace with increased work load (140 officers average in the 60's, 70's and 80's and 151 officers in 2008) call load has doubled during this period. • Distrust from the minority community in Duluth • The need to compete for other city resources (MIS, facilities, snowplowing) sometimes stalls our priorities and leaves staff frustrated • Animosity between department heads due to lack of city resources • Lack of preparedness for a civil disturbance • We are at capacity to deliver additional police services due to staffing levels • Others such as health care providers – laws, rules, and policies block us • Loss of experienced officers within 3-5 years • Lack of capitol investment to improve operations (facility, technology, equipment) • Problems with 911 dispatching system (St. Louis County) affects our operations (crimeview, records)

Initiatives and Improvements

Improving Service -

Keeping up with Demands - The Department must increase staff of sworn and non-sworn personnel to properly address demands for service. The Department is operating at capacity and will not be able to sustain the increasing demand for service. The Department will need to look at a reduction in services which will negatively impact the community and Department.

Customer Service Center - This was a 24/7 operation prior to 2005. Budget and staffing shortages forced a reduction in hours of operation to 10 hours. Increasing 24/7 coverage would allow accessibility to police services and callers would not be subjected to a phone tree that is the source of citizen complaints due to difficulty navigating and timeliness of service.

Phone Tree – The system has not been repaired as there is no current MIS staff proficient in it's operation. We have received notification from both Hermantown and Proctor PD they are receiving many calls from Duluth residents who cannot reach our staff by phone.

Community Service Officer –The development of the CSO position and Park Ranger Program allows the Department to have a presence in the community where a presence would otherwise not be available. These programs give the Department an opportunity to see the employees at work and consider them for employment as police officers.

Maintaining Staffing Levels - The ability to project staffing shortages and hire in preparation for an employees separation from employment would allow the Department to hire and train officers (9 month process) so we can remain at or near staffing levels. Staying at or near staffing levels would save on overtime expenditures caused by backfilling positions and overtime could be used for special problem solving projects and directed patrol. In addition, the Department would stabilize the work force and get a reprieve from non-stop training regimen that is long and arduous and leads to burnout of training officers.

Commitment to Excellence - All personnel must be committed to providing excellent customer service and demonstrating empathy and personal investment into problem solving. This occurs by a clear statement of expectations and accountability while providing immediate oversight and direction relative to new directives and policies.

Utilizing Technology - Continue to search for technology that maximizes efficiency. Crime View, ticket-writers and field-based reporting and others will allow the officers to become more efficient in their work, and allow more time to conduct follow-up investigation and focus efforts on problem areas by proactive response not reactive. Non-sworn staff also benefit from these technologies because automation of pass through of information from ticket writer and field based reporting will allow records employees act as verifiers rather than data entry persons.

Initiatives and Improvements

Innovation -

Shared Services - The Department is looking for opportunities to partner with St. Louis County Sheriffs Department to share services. The two organizations have crime scene units that require great technical skill and very expensive technical equipment. Sharing services would increase the level of service while decreasing costs, truly a win-win for the Department and the public.

Technological Advancements - The Department continues to look to technology to maximize efficiencies.

- Ticket writer, field based reports, scanning of documents, electronic warrant requests, will save the Department time.
- Crime View recognizes crime trends and allows police to identify and focus on crime hot spots.
- ICOP, in-car cameras were put into use in 2008 and capture evidence while protecting the City from false claims against police that tax the City Attorney's Office and our investigative time.
- The Early Warning System tracks potential problem employees by monitoring, commendations, complaints, use of force and sick time to identify and protect employees at risk and addresses behavior or need for other services. This will help keep employees healthy and limit liability for the City.
- Digital recording and electronic file management/scanning are a priority and will streamline the reporting process for sworn and non-sworn staff.

Revenue - The Department is pursuing administrative ticketing and fine management as a revenue source that will increase revenue for the City.

Call Reduction - We are also researching ways to reduce our calls for service. The focus currently is on alarm response. We respond to thousands of alarms every year and 99.99% are false. With a new ordinance we can warn alarm owners of habitual false alarms and charge for future response.

User Fees - There are several companies that work with public safety departments and charge out of towners for the use of services. Accident investigation is the primary charge for this type of user fee.

Initiatives and Improvements

Accountability -

Employee Development - In 2008, the Department implemented a formalized process for employee development assessment. This process directs the employee to self-assess performance and professional development. The assessment is then reviewed by a supervisor. These assessments occur twice annually and are an opportunity to set expectations for performance and set professional development goals.

Quality Control - Also in 2008, the Department promoted six lieutenants to coach, guide and mentor our staff. These lieutenants are tasked with ensuring quality control.

Credibility - We are creating a culture from the Chief to officer to civilian staff for immediate attention to citizen complaints and concerns. Our process must be quick, credible and transparent to allow the Department to have credibility within the community.

Additional Analysis

Most Pressing issues currently facing the Department

Operational/Managerial -

Strained Resources - The demands for service and number of sworn and non-sworn staff have reached capacity. The Department will not sustain increases in demands for service and needs to increase staffing numbers and increase our use of new technology. We have attempted to maximize efficiency, but are now at a point where increased staffing or substantial technological investment is necessary to maintain service. With additional staff and/or investment in technology, we will better serve the community by maintaining and hopefully elevating the level of service. Quicker response times, more community police officers and fully staffed investigative units will offer higher clearance rates.

Outdated Facilities - A close second is the condition of our facilities. Our property and evidence room is at crisis stage. We have simply run out of room. In addition damp conditions has ruined evidence and property which has come at a substantial cost. Working conditions are cramped and inefficient work space. For the 140 or so male employees, we have one, old, moldy shower for them to use. The locker room is original to 1928 and is referred to by staff as "the gorilla cage" due to the bad odor. The two victim and suspect interview rooms in headquarters consist of old broom closets.

Policy/Budget -

Inadequate Funding - Lack of adequate operating budget leads to less overtime for crime prevention projects, reduces opportunities to properly train staff. The Department has minimum staffing on patrol and it is difficult to schedule officers for training time when their absence will create overtime. The remedy many times is the officer does not have the ability to train. Failing to provide training stalls professional development and is demoralizing to the employee. The Department has in the past used grant funding successfully. Unfortunately, the budget and staffing cuts limited the Department's ability to dedicate resources specifically to grant management. In the coming months, the Department will have access to a grant manager that will allow the Department to find other funding sources necessary to deliver effective police services to the community.

93.5% of the Duluth Police Department's budget consists of salary and benefits. According to the International Association of Police Chiefs, the country's average police department budget is consists of 85% salary and benefits. This means DPD has substantially less money to invest in training, equipment, and other operational necessities.

Policy Update - In 2007 and early 2008, our entire policy manual was re-written by a retired former lieutenant who worked as a consultant. The manual reflects modern day best practices and will direct staff in a manner that protects employees and the City from liability.

Additional Analysis

Increasing Revenue - The department is also constantly examining ways to increase revenue and reduce costs. We are currently working on an administrative fine plan that will bring in substantial revenue.

Public -

Community Partnership - Continuing to attain and maintain a high level of service when the demands become greater and we are nearing capacity. The Department values the community partnerships we have strived to achieve and we want to hold up our end and work to maintain a quality of life and do our part in problem solving.

Improving Relationships - We need to continue to improve relationships with communities of color. We need to continue to have open dialog with the many ethnically diverse local leaders. We are working closely with the disenfranchised to discuss ways to improve trust and improve our working relationship. There are on-going talks about a citizen review board which the department is in favor of.

Building the Future - Lastly, we need to develop our female and minority officers for future command staff positions.

What is the City of Duluth's most important goal for the next 12-18 months?

Develop a Stable Government - Establishing a mission statement that will allow all of the departments to understand what are the priorities of this administration (failure to identify funding priorities has created animosity between department heads as every department has felt the financial squeeze of ongoing budget shortages). Among those priorities should be to get the City back on track financially and concentrate on budgeting for core city services. We must develop a stable government that concentrates on the "need to do" not the "nice to do." We must vigorously pursue economic development opportunities to build a vibrant, thriving community.

How will your Department contribute to the achievement of that goal?

Maximizing Resources - The Department will continue to operate efficiently and maximize all its resources to provide the highest level of community service. We will aggressively pursue other revenue streams such s administrative fines, forfeitures and grants. We will accept realistic staffing and funding while focusing on maintaining safe communities and quality of life for residents, visitors and businesses that will improve marketability of the City to prospective business developers.

Additional Analysis

Increasing Revenue - As mentioned previously, we are working with a company to manage all aspects of parking ticket management. The result will be a major increase in revenue at little to no cost to the city. We hope to have this program implemented by this summer and a presentation for the Mayor and CAO is forthcoming.

What obstacles do we face standing in the way of being more effective?

Working Together - We need to improve working relationships with other City departments and concentrate on working collaboratively and not in competition.

Removing Obstacles - The Chief should receive a clear mission and the ability to analyze problems and apply solutions to the problem without interference.

Voicing our Needs - The Department has in the past had the inability to be heard by our elected officials on our Department needs to be more effective and deliver the best services.

What one or two things can the Mayor or CAO do that would help you improve the effectiveness of your Department?

Invest in the Department - Allocate a realistic budget that allows the Department to attain and sustain safe communities and maintain our high quality of life. To be successful, the Department will need adequate financial resources to equip and train staff. The Department operates very efficiently and has reached capacity with the demand for service exceeding the ability of the staff to sustain it. We must either increase the number of non-sworn staff or make serious investment in technological improvements to help with the ever increasing work load. Support increases in sworn staffing to 160 officers.

What could be done to improve collaboration among the departments?

Address Controversy - Department directors must continue to meet on a regular basis but allow managers to also collaborate. Monthly meetings to discuss issues and work on solutions, increase communication, build rapport and identify common areas of overlap in responsibility, response, goals and objectives to help delineate rather than replicate services. The current atmosphere where the police department has been singled out for not having the severity of cuts other departments have faced has created an unhealthy and unproductive environment for collaboration. The city must prioritize the importance of the departments and not allow department heads to make negative comments about other city departments budgets. Failure to rectify the current situation will lead to further discord and lack of progress.

Additional Analysis

What is the public's perception of your department's operations?

The Department recently utilized a State Community Crime Prevention grant to survey the community on a number of issues including level of service, public perception, and fear of crime. A copy of the survey has been submitted with this report. The Department is riding the high tide of public perception, due to low major crime, an increased public profile, and hard work across the board by the entire department. However, with the nature of urban policing, public perception and support can change in a flash.

What actions can be taken to improve public perception of your department's operations?

We will continue to work collaboratively with all communities; business, government, residents, non-profits to attain and sustain safe communities and quality of life. We engage and trust the community and the community will engage and trust the Department. We will consider professionalism in action and words while we model and reinforce integrity throughout the Department. The Department will continue to be transparent in our intentions and operations. We will also continue to work toward developing a sustainable citizen's review board to help create trust with our various communities.

We will also continue to be a visible department and promote ourselves and the positive impact we are making. We will continue to meet regularly with neighborhood and business groups to promote a safer and healthier community.

What actions can be taken to improve public perceptions about the services provided within your department and divisions?

We can better educate the public on realistic police responses and understanding our protocol and limitations. We do excellent work daily and we need share our successes with the community through the press and media. We need to engage in continuous recruitment to show how we are always looking to be reflective of our community's diversity. We need to reopen the Police Desk 24/7 and have a professional presence that instills confidence and delivers customer service. We will continue to meet regularly with neighborhood groups, build on and strengthen our citizen patrol and block watches, and ensure the sustainability of popular programs such as the citizen's police academy.

Additional Analysis

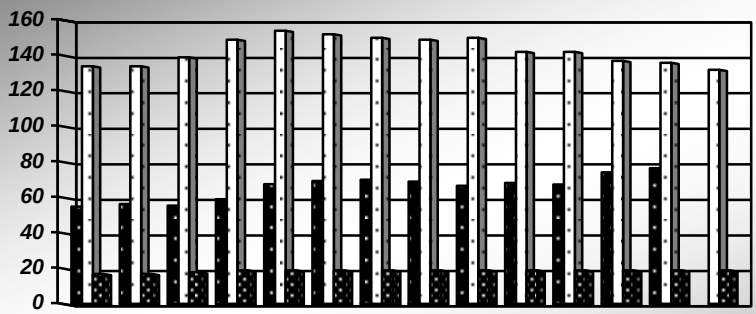
What types of training or development activities would be beneficial to employees (including you and your managers) within your department?

- Time management/efficiency
- Team building
- Effective communication (many complaints come from tone and attitude)
- Models of effective government
- Building an effective employee assessment process (we don't have one in place for employees within the City)

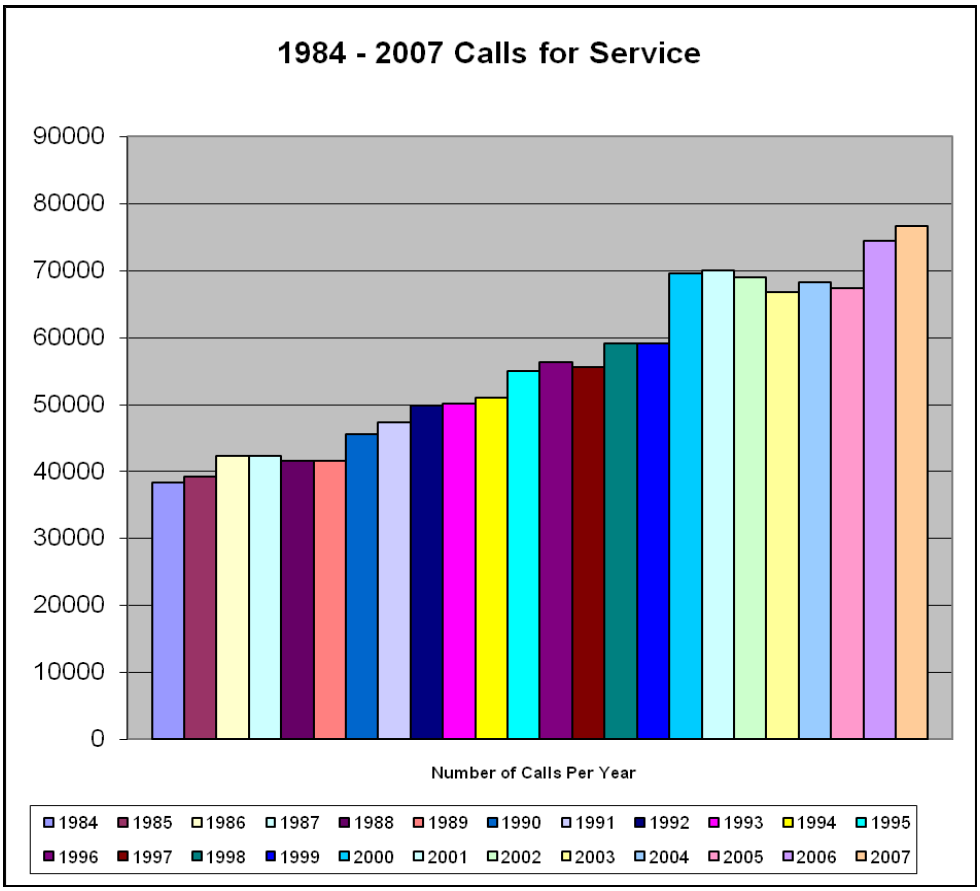
Describe the process by which you came up with this report who was involved with its creation?

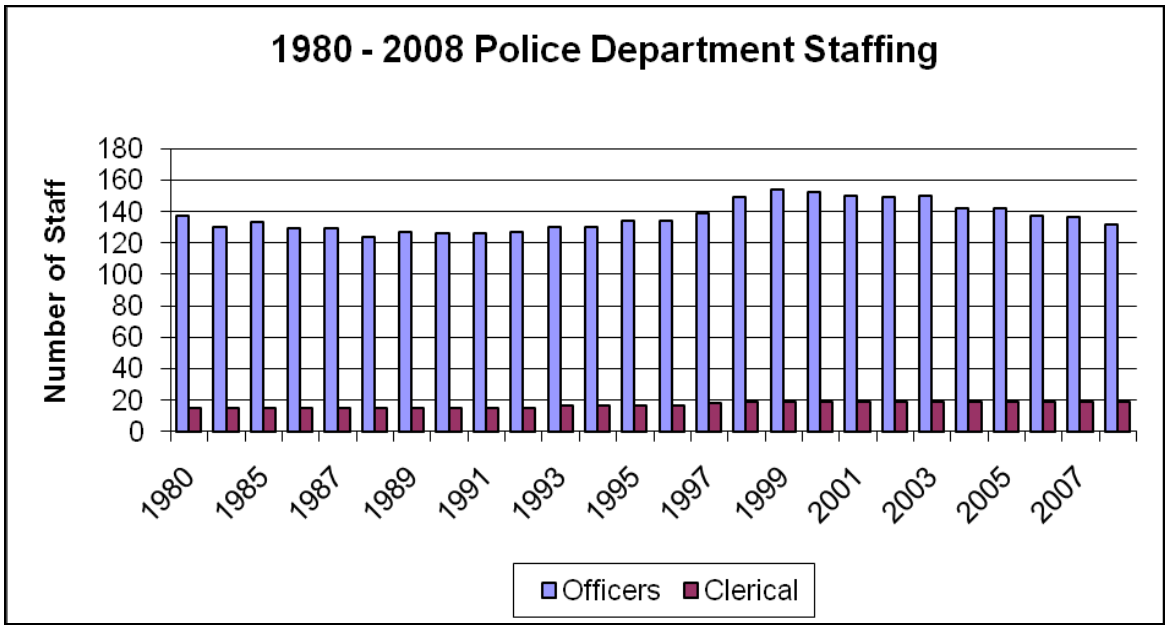
The Police Department has two divisions, Patrol and Investigative/Administrative Division. The deputy chiefs and lieutenants from each division met separately to brainstorm and formulate the SWOT analysis. Once the SWOT analysis was completed, lieutenants and deputy chiefs provided written perspective on the additional questions. This perspective is reflected in the final report which was reviewed and edited by Chief Ramsay.

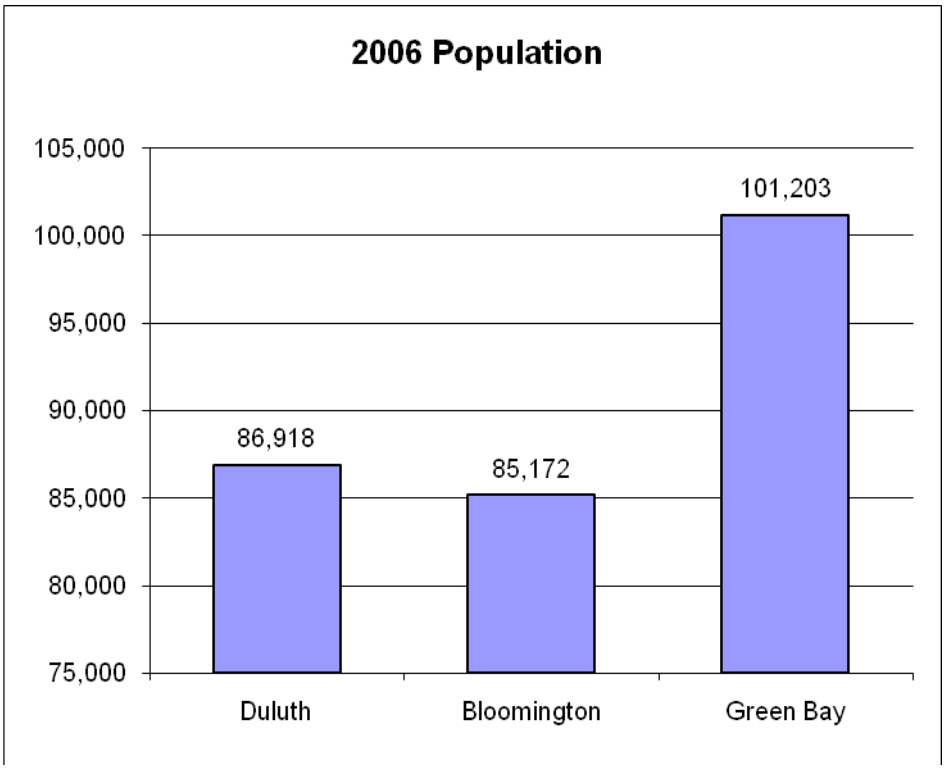
Calls for Service and Staffing: 1995-2008

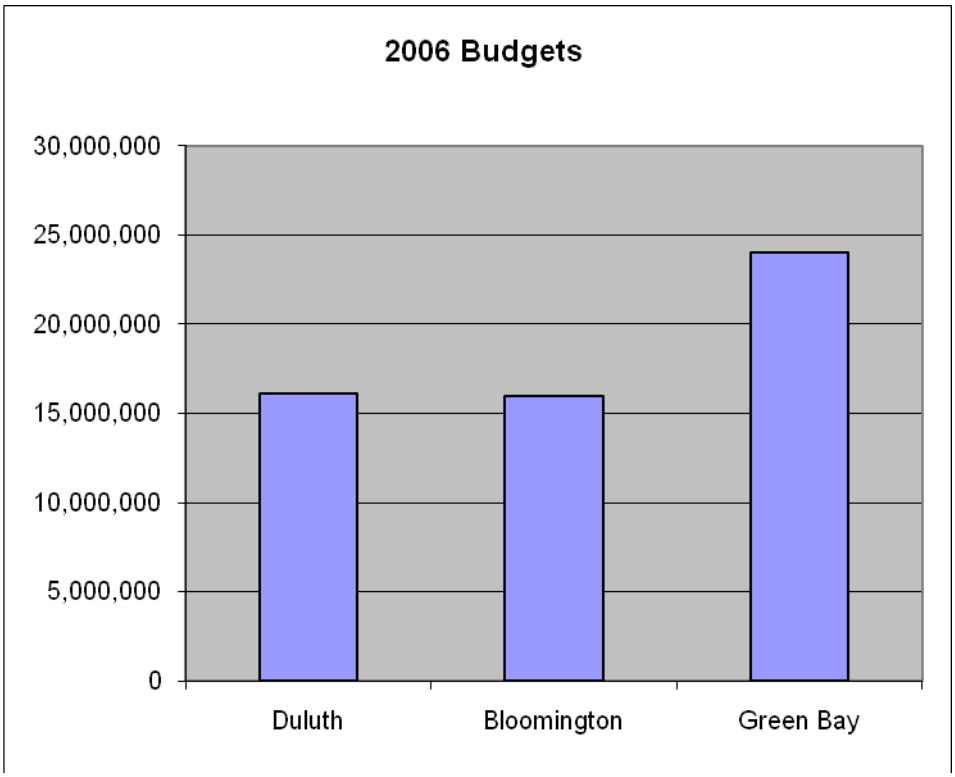


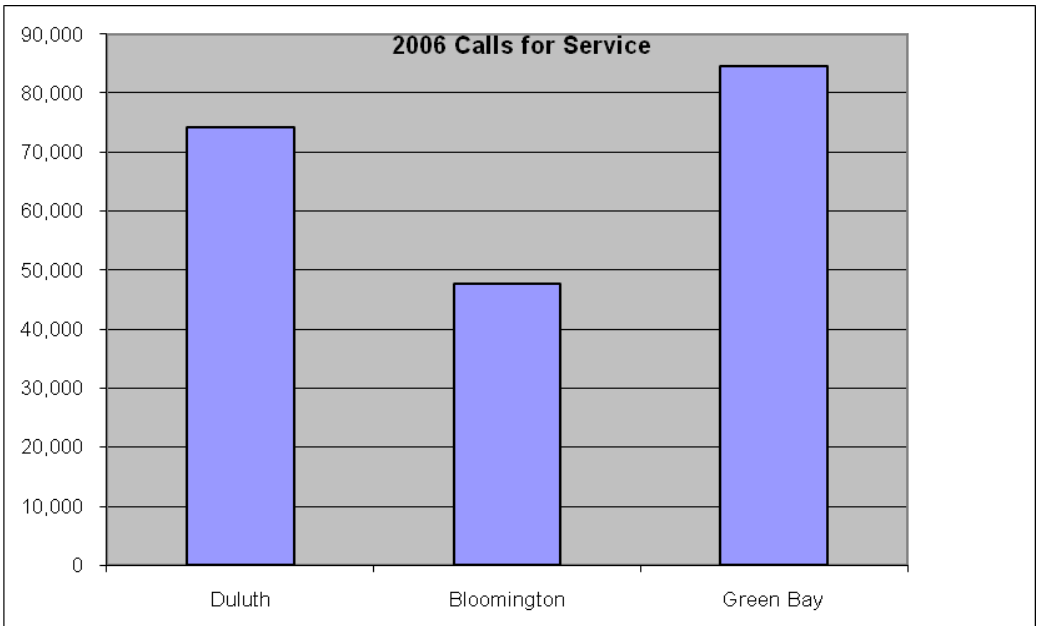
	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
CFS x 1000	55	56.3	55.5	59	67.6	69.4	70	68.9	66.7	68.2	67.3	74.3	76.5	
Sworn Staff	134	134	139	149	154	152	150	149	150	142	142	137	136	132
Civilian Staff	17	17	18	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19

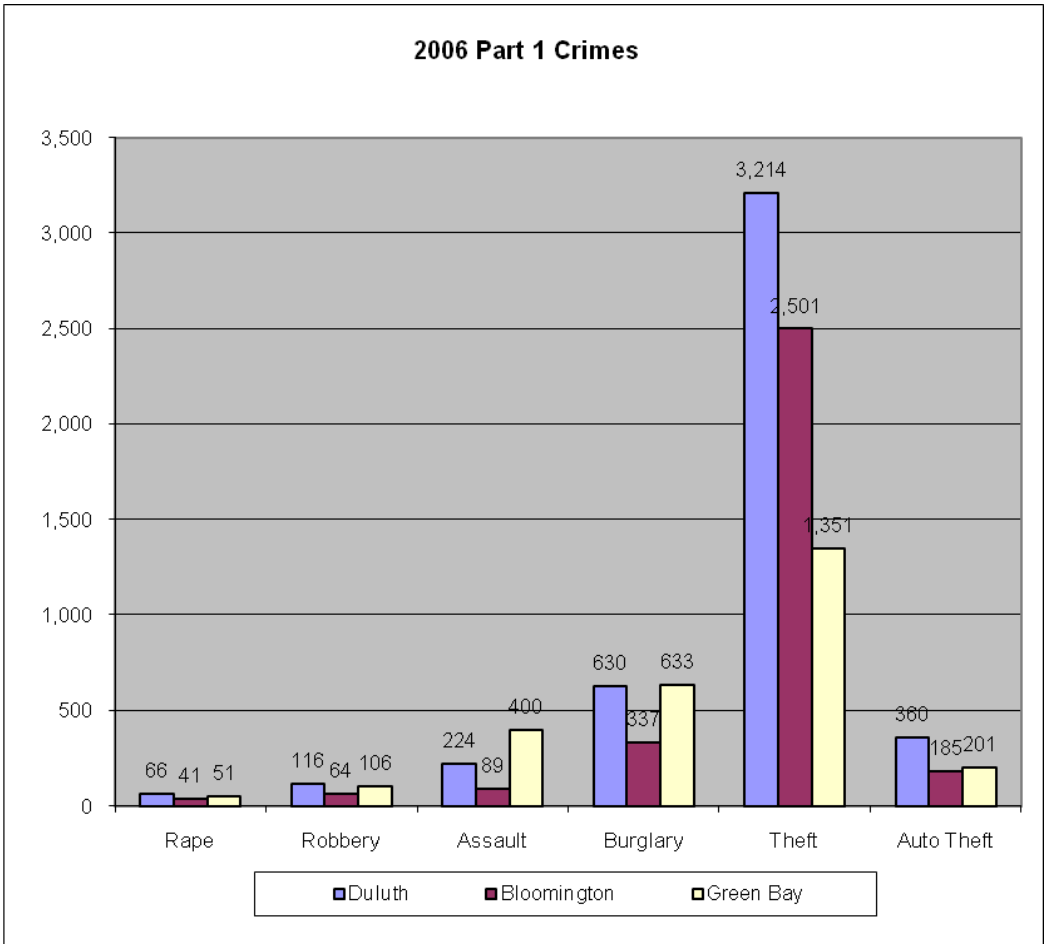

1984 - 2007 Calls for Service
90000
80000
70000
60000
50000
40000
30000
20000
10000
0
Number of Calls Per Year
1984 1985 1986 1987 1988 1989 1990 1991 1992 1993 1994 1995
1996 1997 1998 1999 2000 2001 2002 2003 2004 2005 2006 2007


1980 - 2008 Police Department Staffing
Number of Staff
180
160
140
120
100
80
60
40
20
0
1980
1985
1987
1989
1991
1993
1995
1997
1999
2001
2003
2005
2007
Officers
Clerical


2006 Population
105,000
100,000
95,000
90,000
85,000
80,000
75,000
86,918
85,172
101,203
Duluth
Bloomington
Green Bay


2006 Budgets
30,000,000
25,000,000
20,000,000
15,000,000
10,000,000
5,000,000
0
Duluth
Bloomington
Green Bay


2006 Calls for Service
90,000
80,000
70,000
60,000
50,000
40,000
30,000
20,000
10,000
0
Duluth
Bloomington
Green Bay


2006 Part 1 Crimes
3,500
3,000
2,500
2,000
1,500
1,000
500
0
66
41
51
116
64
106
224
89
400
630
337
633
3,214
2,501
1,351
360
185
201
Rape
Robbery
Assault
Burglary
Theft
Auto Theft
Duluth
Bloomington
Green Bay

Duluth Police

Innovation in Policing