

Summary of BerryDunn Public Safety Services Operational Review & Assessment • Mar. 24, 2024

The City of Urbana has a \$235,000 contract with consultant BerryDunn to conduct a Public Safety Assessment of Police and Fire. It has 4 phases - the first phase is 289 pages and was released March 13, 2024.

- 1 - Staffing Study Report for Police & Fire (Current Phase)
- 2 - Essential Calls for Service Report
- 3 - Proposed Alternative Response Plan
- 4 - Alternative Response Implementation Action Plan

Give your input: BerryDunn presents at Urbana City Council Meeting, Monday, March 25th at 7pm 400 S. Vine Street. Speak at the beginning of the meeting or email: CityCouncil@urbanaininois.us and ask “please read this into the record.” Watch online: <https://urbanapublictelevision.org>.

Key Recommendations:

Although BerryDunn did not encounter any circumstances that produced critical/priority recommendations (p 16), they provide some significant recommendations. A few of note for Urbana Police Department (UPD) are to create:

1. A minimum patrol staffing level of 44 positions: adding 7 sworn and 7 non-sworn Community Service Responder (CSR) officers (46% increase in patrol staff). (p18)
2. A police & community working group to explore adding more “modern technology.” (p20)
3. A non-sworn Community Service Responder (CSR) unit to assume some of the workload of sworn officers and to provide an alternative to sworn response to community service needs. (p21)

Police Budget (p 33)

- UPD Budget is 30% (\$13,308,905) of 2023 General Operating budget (\$42,730,065)
- UPD Budget has risen by 29.8% since 2019. By comparison, the General Operating Budget rose 24.83%

Urbana Police Staff:

- 74.5 total police positions budgeted in 2023 (p34)
 - 59 Police Officers
 - 17 Management level (Chief, Deputy, Lieutenants, Sergeants)
 - 30 Patrol Officers
 - 8 Detectives including 2 Street Crimes Task Force Detectives
 - 4 Misc: 2 School Resource Officers, 1 Behavioral Health Detective, 1 K-9
 - 15.5 Civilian Staff
- BerryDunn notes:
 - UPD has a higher % of administrators to staff than similar studied cities (p37)
 - UPD has a higher % of investigation staff than similar studied cities (p37)
 - UPD has a lower # of Calls for Service per First Responder than similar studied cities (p112)
 - There appears to be an opportunity to move duties currently performed by patrol to the investigation department as investigation has “strong availability” and patrol “is struggling to manage current obligated workload.” (p137)

Calls for Service (CFS)

- The basis of the BerryDunn report is an analysis of community calls for service (CFS) also referred to as “obligated workload” and drives needs (p71)
- **What does the community call the police for? (p80)**
 - 64.6% are calls for services (non criminal) – using 66% of officer time
 - 32.7% are calls for crime – using 33% of officer time
 - 2.67% are calls related to traffic – using 1% officer time.
- Berry Dunn recommends the following breakdown of officer time: (p114)
 - 30% responding to calls for service/obligated workload (currently UPD use 39% of their time on this)
 - 30% paperwork (currently UPD staff use 39% on paperwork, although BD indicates paperwork times take longer than other studied communities on one report per shift). (p75)
 - 40% free time to pursue officer initiated activities
 - Past officer initiated engagements were 54.3% traffic, 39% service and 6.6% crime (p81)

Urbana CFS show a significant opportunity for Alternative Responses:

- **66% of officer time is used on calls for services (non criminal) in Urbana compared to similar studied cities where only 38.5% of officer time is used on service calls. (p82)**
- BerryDunn: “the largest driver of activity for UPD is related to non-criminal activity...[This is] why many community members... as well as many police leaders, are seeking alternative responses to community service needs that utilize resources—often less expensive and more specifically prepared for these types of calls—other than police to respond to community service needs.” (p81)
- BerryDunn: “alternative response options... might decrease the number of incidents and total hours that sworn police officers need to spend responding to community-initiated calls for service. The community has also expressed a desire to seek ways to support community service needs with responding resources other than armed police response. Additionally, the City and UPD have expressed a desire to analyze the nature of calls for service to which UPD responds and determine which ones are essential for police response. ” (p105)

Connecting the Dots: BerryDunn’s report recommends an increase of 14 personnel at Urbana Police Dept.

- This seems premature as 1) it is prior to an analysis of and recommendations for alternative responder models 2) Urbana has not constituted a stakeholder committee to gather input from community partners.
- There are concerns that this phase was timed to justify police increases in the FY25 Budget that will be voted on in June.
- This is a large, unprecedented increase in police personnel that will cost \$1+ Million more annually (Starting pay for patrol officer: \$72,000 salary a year with total cost ~\$100,000/year).
- BerryDunn’s recommendation is to greatly increase “officer initiated activities”-- the majority of which are traffic. Having officers increase traffic stops is concerning as there have been long standing racial disparities in traffic stops in Urbana. In 2022, 46.5% of traffic stops are of African Americans who make up 18% of the population (See Cha Jua’s “Traffic-stop report reveals escalating racism among police” NG, Oct. 15, 2023).

**Do you think BerryDunn’s recommendation for more sworn officers is justifiable at this time?
What next steps would you like to see? We encourage you to get involved in the conversation.**