

## **RPS Subcommittee A - Meeting #7**

**Thursday, December 9 | 6:30-7:00 pm ET**

**RPS Subcommittee Attendees:** Travis Brooks, Laura Lewis, George Mcgonigal, Rob Gearheart, Mary Orsaio, Tim Little, Harry Smith

**CPE Attendees:** Josh Young, Lillian Hua, Sarah Tofte

### **MEETING PURPOSE:**

- Solidify meeting cadence and additional December meeting dates

### **AGENDA & NOTES:**

5 min **Welcome | All**

- Check-in

10 min **Housekeeping | All**

- Reminder that Call Types: Staffing Levels spreadsheets final decisions are due next Wednesday, December 15, at 11:59pm EST
  - All data will be copied from the sheets on the morning of Thursday, December 16th, and put into the final iterations of the formulas
- December Meeting Cadence
  - What do we still have to cover?
    - Beat design: Guiding principles (today)
    - Beat design: Analysis
      - Layered map of calls for service
    - ~~Shift assignments: Guiding principles~~
    - Role and impact of LEAD and other programs
    - Review finalized Call Types: Staffing Levels outcomes
      - Number of unarmed officers
        - Perhaps beat design might inform unarmed officers' descriptions
  - Per the when2meet scheduler and regular cadence, the following dates are available for this subcommittee to meet
    - Monday, 12/13 4:00-6:00pm
    - **Tuesday, 12/14 4:00-6:00pm**
    - **Thursday, 12/16 6:00-7:30pm**
    - **Monday, 12/20 4:30-6:00pm**
  - How many meetings, or how much meeting time, is needed to cover the above? Which dates will we meet on?

30 min **Beat Design: Guiding Principles | All**

- See below

## Beat Design: Guiding Principles

### What is a beat?

A beat is the territory that a police officer patrols. Beat policing is based on traditional policing models developed in the late 19th and early 20th century, and utilizes the close relationship with the community members within the assigned beat to strengthen police effectiveness and encourage cooperative efforts to make a safer community.

### Ithaca's Patrol Division ([sourced here](#))

The mission of the Patrol Division is to improve the quality of life in the Ithaca community while working within the framework of the United States Constitution, New York State laws, and local Ithaca city codes. Officers assigned to the Patrol Division are proactive in their approach to helping serve the Ithaca community and work hard to ensure public safety is not compromised. You will find officers that are active in their assigned sectors; getting to know employees, business owners, and developing working relationships with the people in their sector neighborhoods. The Patrol Division responds to more than 20,000 calls for service each year.

The Patrol Division is the largest and most visible division of the Police Department. It has 3 platoons:

B-Line 7 a.m. - 3 p.m.

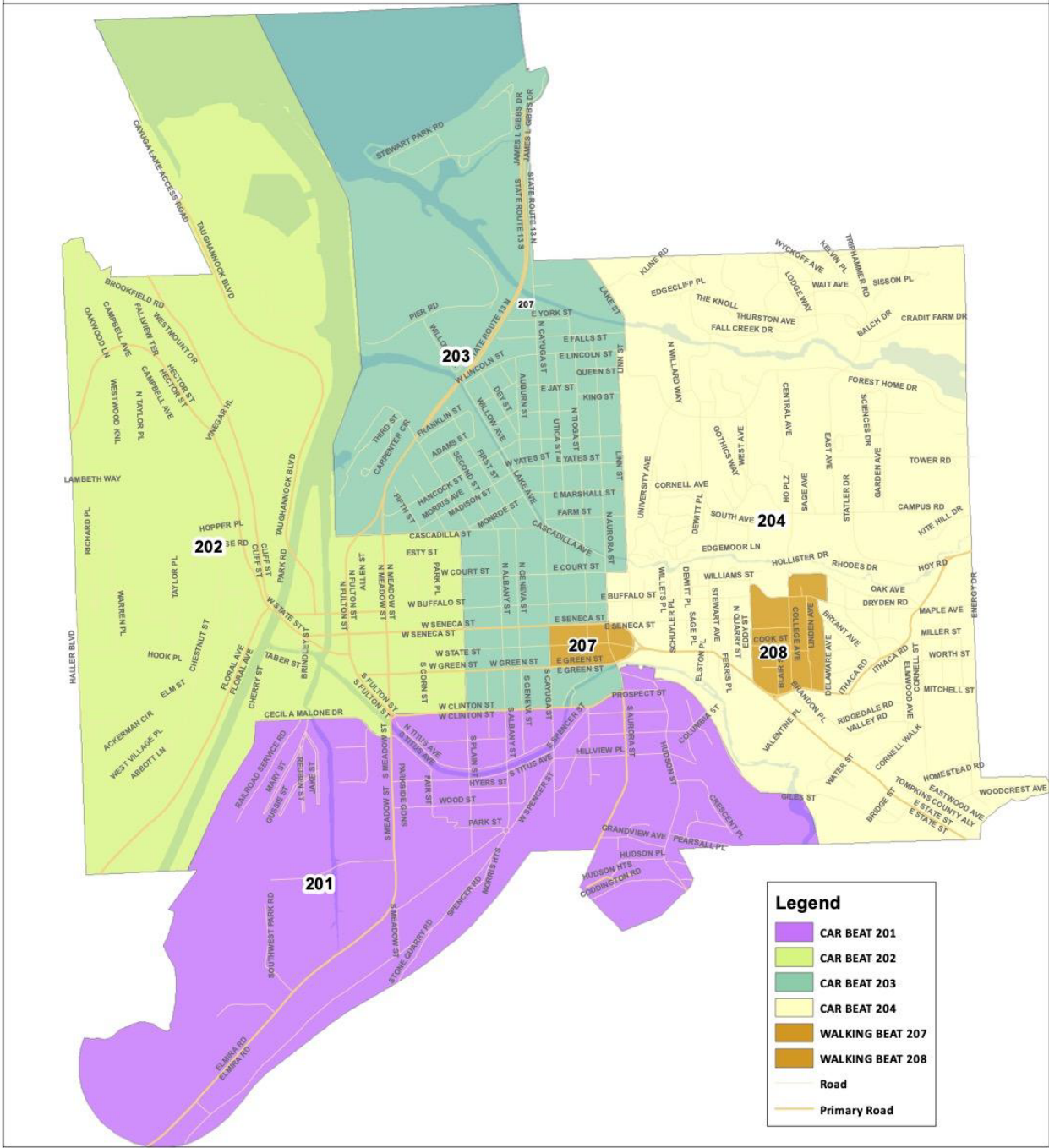
C-Line 3 p.m. - 11 p.m.

A-Line 11 p.m. - 7 a.m.

Each platoon consists of 1 Lieutenant, 2 Sergeants, and 12 officers. The patrol officers are currently assigned to permanent shifts with rotating days off. The city is divided into 4 sectors and 2 walking posts. Officers cover their respective sectors and posts using cars, bicycles, and foot patrol.

An image of the Ithaca Police Department's current beat/patrol design can be found below. [A higher-definition PDF can be found here in the shared Subcommittee drive as well.](#)

# POLICE BEATS 2018 - CITY OF ITHACA NY



**Legend**

- CAR BEAT 201
- CAR BEAT 202
- CAR BEAT 203
- CAR BEAT 204
- WALKING BEAT 207
- WALKING BEAT 208
- Road
- Primary Road

0      1,600      3,200 Feet

NY State Plane, Central GRS 80 Datum  
 Map Source: Tompkins County Digital Planimetric Map 1991-2018  
 Dat Source: City of Ithaca Police Dept. 2018  
 Map Prepared by: GIS Program, City of Ithaca, NY, November 2018

## Guiding Principles Questions

The subcommittee should try to have a comprehensive discussion and reach some consensus around the topics below, with the understanding that the notes taken here will be translated by a technical writer into the subcommittee's recommendations.

<p>How might officer workloads currently be imbalanced by the beat design? Where is there excessive variation?</p>	<p>█████ Sergeants have supervisory discretion as to who is assigned to beats.</p> <p>█████ If there is a sense that some officers are not pulling their weight, how does that affect their beat assignment? Think this is related to culture shifts of the whole department.</p>
<p>Should individual officers be assigned to specific beats long term, or does it change periodically?</p>	<p>█████ Officers should rotate in and out of various beats so people (especially newer recruits) aren't left with "easy" or relatively relaxed beats.</p> <p>█████ If you assign someone a walking beat and they don't want to be proactive, they will do their best to not be proactive. But an officer who wants the walking beat will do it well. Maybe they receive some sort of incentive for doing so and get a e.g. 4 month tenure on it. Should it be randomized or assigned/incentivized?</p> <p>Hans: Both might be good; deliverables might be effective. Recent example of an officer handing out business cards with QR codes for people to rate how they're doing re: communicating with the community, etc. If supervisors reframe what they want from officers to be "communication and engagement with the community" instead of "gun arrests," it could change things.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• █████ Metrics and such are hard because if officers are e.g. down on a quota, they might just end up pulling over whomever. I don't want arrests and such to be prioritized over de-escalation, etc.</li> </ul> <p>█████ I like the incentives idea, I like the questions █████ raised. People being assigned something they don't want to do is a fundamental problem - incentives might help. You also have to hold people accountable. When I look at the structure of Ithaca, there are only so many places you could be effective on foot. A few hotspots are downtown but most are on the Hill. Also, beats made decades ago don't represent where people actually live in the community now. There are good,</p>

	implementable ideas being suggested to quantify and promote community engagement.
How should the design of the beats facilitate community policing? Do officers have specific assignments for community policing within their beat (e.g. attending community meetings)?	Hans: Most foot patrols in Philadelphia were focused on hot spots/"problem areas," with the idea that foot patrols would be more effective at deterring crime and violence. Foot patrol consisted of district officers; they did not constitute their own unit. They found that this did decrease the problem, albeit sometimes shifted the problem. ██████ I think we really need to listen to IPD, since they do this work.
Should call diversion and expanded alternative response systems affect beat design? If so, how?	██████ Not sure, because we need to see the descriptions and figure out how they will be most useful.

██████ Is it possible or beneficial, instead of having 12 officers/platoon, for day or evening shift to have more bodies than the 11-7 shift?

██████ I don't think so - when something happens at night, it's very hard to reach people or find enough assistance. Even though call volume is lower, there are also fewer resources available (ex. there are currently no investigators, investigative supervisors, etc.). Night shift would benefit from having more resources

Rob: Perhaps looking at a zone and identifying certain places where you can expect officers to get out of their car to engage people would be helpful. There is a lot of pedestrian traffic in certain places; if officers were engaging there it'd be great.

I can't imagine that we would want officers who don't want to talk to people; it's a fundamental part of the role.

██████ It's important that a cultural shift in the department and an acknowledgement of what culture is valued play a fundamental role. It seems important that all officers respond when there is a crisis. It's important that we have metrics to ensure that needs are being met, but that they aren't seen as quotas to be met.

██████ Our most important charge is not changing the name but changing the culture of IPD. I would love to see officers walking in West Village, Chestnut, my ward. Let's say someone is in West Village walking, then goes to Chestnut, walks, gets to know people, then goes downtown. Is that practical? Is that something one person could do?

██████ No, because we don't have enough people.

██████ When you say at our current levels, who do you mean?

██████ If we were back up to 12-12-12 on our platoons, then it'd be possible and would

really change things. But we have so many officers out that there is no way people can get out of their calls and walking beats.

██████ Agree - what's on paper does not accurately show who is showing up to work. My understanding is there has been real displacement of people of color in particular; there used to be a more spread out population of Black and brown community members, who are now more concentrated in West Hill. There has been population growth as a whole, but in the central part of the city, there is more housing being built and correspondingly will have greater population density, so needs may shift.

██████ ████████ hit the nail with where walking beats would be helpful. Capacity is an issue but let's think about this long-term. I do want to get into some ideas about how we can increase and build relationships between officers and the community. This whole thing falls flat if we don't figure that out.