



**TO:** Mayor and Town Council

**FROM:** Joseph A. Fivas, Town Manager

**DATE:** March 10th, 2015

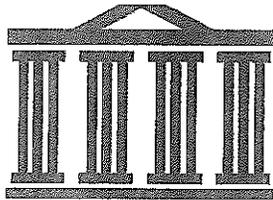
**SUBJECT:** Indian Trail Law Enforcement Study

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The Town Council has received the draft Law Enforcement Study from PERF. The Council may discuss the next steps of this report.

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**Police Services Assessment  
Town of Indian Trail, North Carolina**



**POLICE EXECUTIVE  
RESEARCH FORUM**

**Draft Report  
February 2015**

*Police Executive Research Forum  
1120 Connecticut Avenue NW, Suite 930  
Washington, DC 20036*

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## **Executive Summary**

The Town of Indian Trail, NC, contracted with the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) to conduct a study of the policing needs of the town. Current policing services are provided through a contract between the town and the Union County Sheriff's Office (UCSO). The study sought to perform five core tasks:

1. Identify policy preferences on the provision of law enforcement services.
2. Conduct workload analyses to determine current and projected staffing trends by measuring the actual workload and reviewing population trends.
3. Identify current and future staffing needs and drivers of those staffing needs.
4. Determine recommended services and associated costs.
5. Consider alternative law enforcement service options.

## ***Findings***

- The residents of Indian Trail want cost-efficient policing that provides a high level of services and visibility with deputies who know the town's neighborhoods and are responsive to their needs.
- The town's population is growing, with new housing and commercial development, plus major roadway improvements taking place over the next several years.
- The town gets substantial value from its contractual arrangement with the UCSO, including access to recruitment, hiring, and personnel management services, as well as assistance from the UCSO command structure and other units. Indian Trail should continue to contract for its police services through the UCSO.
- However, given recent population and workload trends, the current contingent of contract deputies is insufficient.
- The current contract should be expanded in stages. Two deputies should be added in the next budget cycle, bringing the total number of sworn personnel to 24. Looking ahead, the Town should consider expanding to 28 sworn personnel in the next 3-5 years, and to 40 by 2025.
- Once fully implemented, the projected annual cost for this expanded police service would be approximately \$3.3 million (using current rates). This would still be competitively priced with a stand-alone police department and would derive the extra benefits of the UCSO contract, including access to their centralized resources.

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- In conjunction with the recommended long-range expansion, and to ensure high-quality police services once major roadway improvements are completed, the Town should consider establishing three police districts for the assignment of personnel and the delivery of police services.
- To further support crime control and prevention efforts in Indian Trail, the town should aggressively adopt the principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design in all of its planning, design, and construction projects.

## **Introduction**

The Town of Indian Trail, North Carolina, is located in Union County, approximately 15 miles southeast of Charlotte. Indian Trail has been characterized by rapid growth, from a population of 1,942 in 1990, to approximately 37,000 in 2015. The town is still growing, but at a slower rate. By 2025, the town is expected to have more than 40,000 residents.

The town is about 20 square miles with an additional 15 square miles of planning area. U.S. 74, a major highway from Charlotte to the southeast, divides the town. Additional throughways are planned or under construction, including a limited access bypass that will speed the flow of traffic between Charlotte and Monroe. The bypass is expected to provide some congestion relief for U.S. 74, the main route through the town. Reconstruction of U.S. 74 is also planned to improve traffic flow.

The town is predominantly residential, with a median housing value of \$173,000 in 2012<sup>1</sup>, up from \$112,000 in 2000 and approximately \$23,000 above the state median housing value. The median household income is approximately \$60,000, which is \$15,000 over the North Carolina state average<sup>2</sup>.

Many Indian Trail residents, attracted by the town's low property tax rate and its location in the Union County school district, commute to Charlotte. The town has a number of amenities that make it a destination for those from other communities, many from out of state. It has a large recreational complex for basketball and volleyball, another for ice skating and hockey, and a third slated to open in 2015 for baseball. Additional recreational opportunities are offered through two new town parks. A 14-screen theater has opened recently as part of a newly developed shopping center.

As with other communities experiencing rapid growth, the issue of public safety, and how best to provide policing services to residents, has taken on added importance in Indian Trail. Therefore, the Town of Indian Trail contracted with the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) to conduct a study of the town's current and future policing needs and how they might best be satisfied.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.city-data.com/city/Indian-Trail-North-Carolina.html](http://www.city-data.com/city/Indian-Trail-North-Carolina.html)

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

## Crime in Indian Trail

Under the Uniform Crime Reporting System (UCR), cities and towns submit, through their state government, data on reported crimes in their jurisdiction to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). UCR Part I crimes are the most serious and/or frequently reported crimes. Part I violent crimes include the offenses of murder, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault. Part I property crimes include burglary (breaking and entering), larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson. Part II offenses are less serious and include such offenses as simple assault; forgery and counterfeiting; fraud; embezzlement; buying, receiving, possessing, selling, concealing, or transporting stolen property; vandalism; weapons offenses; prostitution and commercialized vice; sex offenses (except forcible rape, prostitution, and commercialized vice); drug abuse violations; gambling; nonviolent offenses against the family and children that are not classifiable as other offenses; driving under the influence; and all other offenses except traffic violations. Part I crimes are those reported to the police. Part II offenses are tracked only when an arrest is made.

The table below shows Part I crimes recorded in Indian Trail over the last five years.

Part I UCR Crime in Indian Trail 2010 -2014					
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014*
Total Violent Crimes	51	53	59	56	52
Murder	1	0	0	1	0
Rape	5	7	4	2	7
Robbery	16	12	10	13	11
Aggravated Assault	29	34	45	40	34
Total Property Crime	520	501	436	509	580
Burglary (Breaking & Entering)	175	178	145	138	149
Larceny-Theft	310	295	263	343	413
Motor Vehicle Theft	27	21	25	22	16
Arson	8	7	3	6	2
Total Part I Crime	571	554	495	557	632

Source: Union County Sheriff's Office

\* 2014 numbers are preliminary

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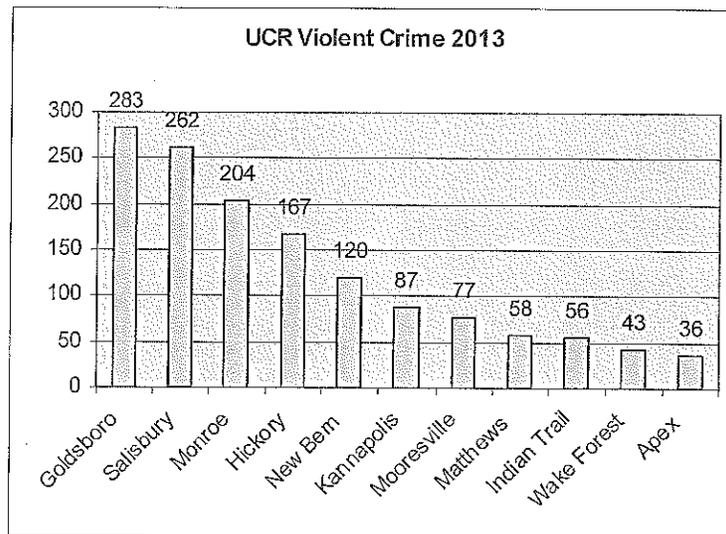
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Overall, the level of violent crime is low in Indian Trail. The next table compares violent crime in Indian Trail to other, similarly sized North Carolina towns for 2013, the last year for which complete information is available for all of the jurisdictions.

**Violent Crime in North Carolina Towns, 2013**

City	Population (estimated)	Violent crime	Murder and non-negligent manslaughter	Rape	Robbery	Aggravated assault	Violent crime rate (per 1,000 residents)
Matthews	29,178	58	1	3	21	33	2.0
New Bern	30,514	120	0	7	43	70	3.9
Salisbury	33,626	262	5	9	78	170	7.8
Mooreville	33,676	77	2	3	16	56	2.3
Wake Forest	33,852	43	0	2	11	30	1.3
Monroe	33,895	204	1	6	72	125	6.0
Indian Trail	37,000	56	1	2	13	40	1.6
Goldsboro	37,230	283	5	3	67	208	7.6
Hickory	40,109	167	3	8	64	92	4.2
Apex	41,356	36	0	5	7	24	0.9
Kannapolis	44,150	87	4	8	25	50	2.0
AVERAGE	35,871	127	2	5	38	82	3.6

The following chart ranks these 11 jurisdictions by the number of violent crimes in 2013.



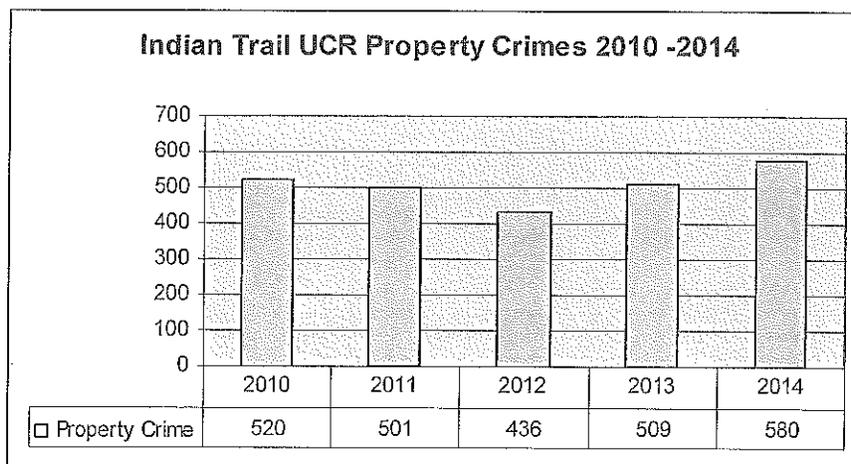
Of the 11 jurisdictions, Indian Trail had the third lowest number of violent crimes in 2013 and the third lowest violent crime rate per 1,000 residents. Only Wake Forest and Apex had smaller

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totals. Indian Trail's violent crime rate was less than half the average rate for all 11 jurisdictions combined.

The next graph shows the number of UCR property crimes reported in Indian Trail for the last five years.



The number of property crimes reported in 2014 is the highest for the five-year period. The increase is primarily driven by an increase in larceny-theft, from 263 in 2012, to 343 in 2013, and 413 in 2014.

Still, the level of property crime in Indian Trail is low when compared with similarly sized North Carolina jurisdictions. The next table shows property crime in Indian Trail and the same 10 jurisdictions for 2013, the last year for which full data are available.

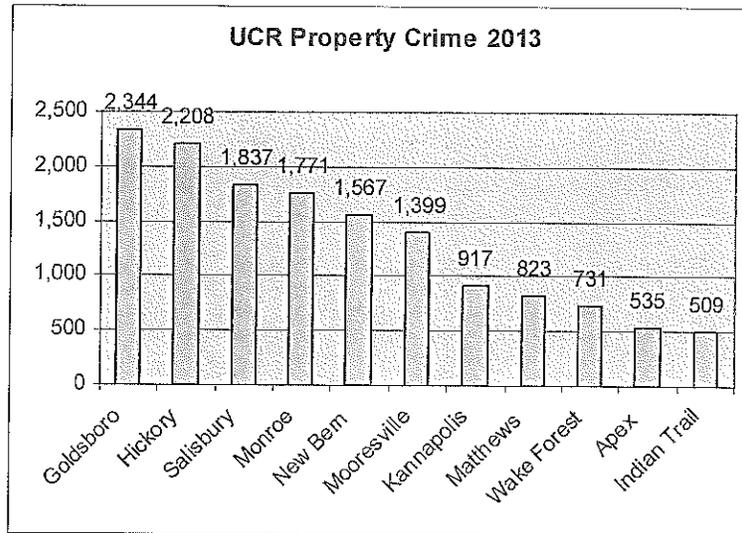
**Property Crime in North Carolina Towns, 2013**

City	Population	Property crime	Burglary	Larceny-theft	Motor vehicle theft	Arson	Property crime rate (per 1,000 residents)
Matthews	29,178	823	87	702	34	5	28.2
New Bern	30,514	1,567	525	992	50	2	51.4
Salisbury	33,626	1,837	475	1,236	126	4	54.6
Mooresville	33,676	1,399	193	1,153	53	3	41.4
Wake Forest	33,852	731	98	618	15	2	21.6
Monroe	33,895	1,771	390	1,304	77	7	52.3
Indian Trail	37,000	509	138	343	22	6	13.8
Goldsboro	37,230	2,344	571	1,670	103	2	63.0
Hickory	40,109	2,208	467	1,590	151	11	55.1
Apex	41,356	535	104	414	17	2	12.9
Kannapolis	44,150	917	290	564	63	7	20.8
AVERAGE	35,871	1,331	303	962	65	5	37.2

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This table and the following graph show that in 2013, Indian Trail had the lowest number of property crimes among the 11 jurisdictions and the second lowest property crime rate, behind only Apex. When the 11 jurisdictions are combined, the property crime rate in Indian Trail was about 60 percent lower than the average.



The relatively low number of crimes in Indian Trail—both violent and property offenses—adds to its attractiveness as a residential community and destination for recreational activities.

## Growth Projections

Indian Trail is growing and has a wide array of development plans. At the start of 2015 there was only one apartment complex in the town, but the number of apartment units is expected to more than double, from 1,200 to 2,500. Additional single family houses are being built as well, along with more recreational facilities. There are plans to increase concentrated commercial areas and to add new businesses. This growth will bring additional people to the town, both residents and visitors, and will increase the diversity of land use. A larger population, more dwelling units, and increased commercial properties have the potential to add targets of opportunity for criminals.

However, the impact of population growth on crime levels and calls for police service is not necessarily a straightforward, direct connection. The number and duration of calls may vary, depending on the demographics of the new population. New dwellings whose owners are gone on long commutes to their workplaces during much of the day are likely to be a source of alarm calls. More unsupervised youths may generate more after-school disturbance calls. A large number of construction projects may result in calls about theft from construction sites and vandalism.

In short, there is no predictable correlation between city size and crime levels.

This variability is evident in the comparison of Indian Trail with similarly sized jurisdictions (populations ranging from 29,000 to 44,000). The combined violent and property crime rates for 2013, expressed in crimes per 1,000 residents, are shown in the next table.

**UCR Crime Rate per 1,000 Residents – 2013**

City	Population	All Part I Crime per 1,000 residents
Matthews	29,178	30.2
New Bern	30,514	55.3
Salisbury	33,626	62.4
Mooresville	33,676	43.8
Wake Forest	33,852	22.9
Monroe	33,895	58.3
Indian Trail	37,000	15.3
Goldsboro	37,230	70.6
Hickory	40,109	59.2
Apex	41,356	13.8
Kannapolis	44,150	22.7

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As illustrated here, jurisdictions of roughly similar size have a wide variation in crime rates, from 13.8 crimes per 1,000 residents in Apex, to a high of 70.6 crimes per 1,000 residents in Goldsboro. In fact, Goldsboro, with a population just slightly higher than Indian Trail's, had a 2013 crime rate that was almost four times that of Indian Trail. In Monroe, whose population is slightly lower than Indian Trail's, the 2013 crime rate was more than three times higher than Indian Trail's.

On a larger scale, in 2013, Charlotte-Mecklenburg, which is North Carolina's largest city, with a population of 838,000, had a crime rate of 42.6 per 1,000 residents. This is significantly lower than Fayetteville (203,000 residents), at 66.3 crimes per 1,000, or Winston-Salem (236,000 residents), at 60.6 crimes per 1,000.

**Size, then, is not a good predictor of the crime rate of a jurisdiction. Although growth in Indian Trail will most likely increase the total amount of crime, it will not necessarily increase the rate of crime per 1,000 residents.**

**If Indian Trail grows wisely in two "dimensions," it may well be able to maintain its very low crime rates. These two dimensions are (1) Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED), and (2) the provision of high-quality police services.**

### ***Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design***

#### **Recommendation:**

**The town should consider incorporating Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design into all of its construction permits, both new and renovations.**

According to the National Crime Prevention Council<sup>3</sup>, CPTED "is based on the principle that proper design and effective use of buildings and public spaces in neighborhoods can lead to a reduction in the fear and incidence of crime, and an improvement in the quality of life for citizens." This multi-disciplinary approach can be used to prevent crime by "designing a physical environment that positively influences human behavior. The theory is based on four principles: natural access control, natural surveillance, territoriality, and maintenance." Both sworn law enforcement deputies and civilian municipal employees can be trained and certified as CPTED planners.

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<sup>3</sup> [www.ncpc.org](http://www.ncpc.org). Other CPTED resources include (<https://www.bja.gov/evaluation/program-crime-prevention/cpted-index.htm>) and the International CPTED Association (<http://www.cpted.net/>).

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By using CPTED, the Town of Indian Trail can build enhanced safety and security into all of its future development. Such an effort will decrease opportunities for crime and contribute to the overall high quality of living in the town. Crime has been reduced in other jurisdictions through the use of closed circuit TV, making residents more aware of home security options, zoning, creating defensible space in new developments and through street lighting strategies.

- For example, a strategy to improve individual home security is to limit the height of plantings in side yards and close to the house's exterior wall. This denies possible burglars hiding spaces.
- Zoning can be used to clearly delineate among private space, buffer zones and public space. Clearly delineating the nature of spaces sends messages that define the acceptable use of each type of space.<sup>4</sup> There is recognition about who is entitled to be in each type of space.
  - Private space is the most secure and access is controlled. Private dwellings are primary examples.
  - Buffer zones, or transitional spaces, define public space from private space. Such areas provide visual and sometime physical barriers between the buffer area and private space and again between the buffer area and the public space. A courtyard between public space and private space may give the impression of limited access without physically limited movement. Landscaping, fences and other barriers help establish the differences between the zones.
  - Public spaces are open areas for general public use. People move freely in public spaces with little or no surveillance.

When new neighborhoods are designed or commercial development is planned the Town can require that the developer plan how the public, buffer and private spaces are established and separated from each other.

- The Town could also establish ordinances that require lighting that deters crime, makes it easier to watch an area and encourages public use by decreasing fear. Lighting should be even to avoid shadows. Bright spots may be used to especially illuminate areas that might provide hiding spots for potential perpetrators, such as at the edges of large parking lots.

### ***High-Quality Police Services***

The second key component in keeping a low crime rate is the provision of high-quality police services. Currently, the Town of Indian Trail provides for police service via a contract with the

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<sup>4</sup> See for example: <http://www.crimewise.com/library/cpted.html> or [http://www.cptedsecurity.com/cpted\\_design\\_guidelines.htm](http://www.cptedsecurity.com/cpted_design_guidelines.htm)

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Union County Sheriff's Office. The total cost to the town for law enforcement services in FY 2014-2015, including the contract with the Sheriff's Office for the services of 22 deputies and equipment, was budgeted at \$1,783,774. Part of the cost includes a town sub-station near the town offices.

Contracting for police services is a common practice throughout the United States. For example, sheriffs' agencies in King County, WA; Los Angeles County, CA; and Broward County, FL have large numbers of contract jurisdictions. The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department provides contract services to 40 of the county's 88 municipalities. Some small jurisdictions in Pennsylvania contract with adjacent jurisdictions for police service.

There are a number of advantages to contracting for police services. The department that provides the services is responsible for recruitment, selection, and training of officers or deputies, which can be a time-consuming and costly process. It usually assumes the risk and carries the insurance that is needed in the event of civil litigation against deputies. It often provides specialized services such as criminal investigations, crime scene processing, traffic enforcement, special investigations such as vice and narcotics, and tactical teams as a part of the overall agency services, rather than as additional costs to the contracting jurisdiction. In many cases, deputies' equipment, technology, and vehicles are included as part of the contract, relieving the contracting jurisdiction from having to furnish, manage, and maintain such physical infrastructure. Deputies assigned to the contracting jurisdiction often get back-up from additional deputies from their parent agency when needed, without extra cost. Overall, contracting for police services usually is cheaper than having an in-house, full-service police department.

The primary perceived drawback to contracting with another agency is a lack of local control over a jurisdiction's law enforcement services. The desire for local control is a deeply ingrained part of American local government. This desire for extremely localized policing explains why in the United States there are approximately 18,000 police departments and sheriff's offices serving a total population of 320 million. By comparison, England and Wales have only 43 law enforcement agencies serving a population of 57 million. Some 86% of U.S. police departments have fewer than 50 sworn officers, and some 73% have fewer than 25 officers.<sup>5</sup> Perhaps the most common reason for the tendency to maintain small agencies in the United States is the perception that small departments are more responsive to local needs and priorities than are larger agencies, especially those that serve multiple municipalities.

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/csllea08.pdf>

However, small agencies are often inefficient because even small departments need a command structure. For example, in the town of Stallings (population 14,500), just north of Indian Trail, the police department has 22 sworn positions, but almost half of those employees are supervisors: a chief, a captain, a lieutenant, a detective sergeant, a detective, a narcotics detective, and four patrol sergeants. Thus, there are 8 people supervising only 14 patrol officers at an annual cost for the Stallings Police Department of \$1.97 million.

Under Indian Trail's FY 2014-2015 contract with the Union County Sheriff's Office, the Sheriff supplies 16 patrol deputies, three traffic control deputies, two sergeants, and one lieutenant. Two of the traffic control deputies are partially funded by a North Carolina Governor's Highway Safety Program grant. The Sheriff also provides a traffic crash investigator deputy. Additional supervision and management is provided by the regular Sheriff's Office command structure.

The contract model also provides for greater flexibility and consistency in many cases. If a contract deputy suffers a long-term injury or disability, he or she is replaced by another deputy. Investigations that are beyond the capacity of the patrol deputies are conducted by investigators from the Sheriff's Office. Because it does not have to accommodate an entire command structure, the Indian Trail contract provides more direct service personnel working in the community than does the Stallings model. The total cost to the Town of Indian Trail for the contract and other law enforcement costs is \$1.78 million, compared to \$1.97 million that Stallings is spending for the lower level of patrol staffing that it has with its own police department.

## **Determining the Need for Police**

Determining the right size for a police force can be a complex undertaking. Much of the determination depends on the needs and preferences of the community. As part of this project, PERF examined a number of sources which supplied information about community preferences.

### 2008 UNC-Charlotte Study

In 2008, the Indian Trail Town Manager asked the Master of Public Administration (MPA) program at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte to investigate the advantages and disadvantages of establishing an independent police department for Indian Trail. As part of the project the following activities were performed:

- Researching previous studies on the topic of police contracting.

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- Identifying 10 North Carolina cities comparable to Indian Trail based on population, median household income, and geographic size.
- Gathering police services cost data from the comparable cities to evaluate police service cost and to forecast the potential cost of establishing an Indian Trail police department.
- Conducting citizen surveys in Indian Trail to gauge community perceptions of crime and police service quality.

The study resulted in the following recommendations<sup>6</sup>:

- Maintain the current contract with the Union County Sheriff's Office.
  - The cost of establishing an independent police department will far exceed the current contract cost.
  - Citizen surveys indicated that the community does not perceive crime as a major problem. Indian Trail's citizens are also satisfied with the current level of police services.
- If local control over police services is desired, then branding or increasing the number of contracted deputies should be considered.
  - Renegotiate the current contract to require that contracted deputies wear uniforms and drive police cruisers that are distinctly marked for Indian Trail.
  - Increase the number of contracted deputies and thus increase the footprint of the town on Union County's police budget.

#### 2009 Public Safety Committee Report

In March 2009, the town's Public Safety Committee, composed of citizens appointed by the town council, issued a draft report regarding recommendations for the "Law Enforcement Level of Service." Specifically, the committee addressed the question, "does Indian Trail need to extend their contract with the UCSO for personnel in order to provide a greater level of service (for the next 12-24 months) in law enforcement in the community?"

The consensus of the Public Safety Committee was that one sworn Community Service Officer and two additional supervisors (one sergeant and one lieutenant) should be added. In addition, the committee recommended that additional deputies be added, with four the consensus number recommended.

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<sup>6</sup> "Indian Trail's Police Services: Crossing Paths with Citizen Need," University of North Carolina, Charlotte Master of Public Administration Program, December 2008.

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2011 ETC Institute Town Survey

In 2011, the town commissioned the ETC Institute, a community-based market research firm, to conduct a community survey of Indian Trail residents.<sup>7</sup> Seventy-four percent indicated that they were satisfied, overall, with the quality of local law enforcement, with only 11% indicating dissatisfaction. The remaining 15% were neutral. The report found that residents “thought the public safety services that should receive additional emphasis over the next two years were the visibility of law enforcement in neighborhoods and enforcement of speed limits in neighborhoods.”

Residents were asked about their preference for an in-house police department or the existing contractual model through the Union County Sheriff’s Office. Fully 68% said they would choose an Indian Trail Police Department over the Sheriff’s Office *if the service and the cost were the same*.

Assuming the service was the same but there was an additional cost to residents to maintain a town police department, those surveyed were asked what they would be willing to pay per month to cover the extra cost. The most frequent response (41%) was nothing. Eleven percent would pay \$1 per month, 13% would pay \$2.50 a month, and 30% would be willing to pay \$5 per month.

2014 PERF Interviews

As part of this study, PERF staff interviewed all members of the Town Council and members of the town’s Public Safety Committee.

Overall, those interviewed expressed satisfaction with the policing service provided by the Union County Sheriff’s Office (UCSO). Most people feel safe in the community. Response time to emergency calls was viewed as acceptable. Both Sheriff Eddie Cathey and Lt. Chase Coble (the commander of the Indian Trail detachment) are widely regarded as responsive and accessible. Many like the current contract arrangement because it not only provides a set of “permanently” assigned deputies to Indian Trail, but also gives the town easy and almost immediate access to the full array of police services that is not typically found in many small municipal agencies. Town officials mentioned the following services as being especially important: specialized investigators, crime scene technicians, the mobile command center, use of ATVs when needed, the Special Response Team (when needed for such episodes as barricaded subjects), and 40-50 additional deputies who are available for critical incidents.

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<sup>7</sup> “2011 Direction Finder® Community Survey: Final Result, Indian Trail, North Carolina,” ETC Institute, March 2011.

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Those interviewed cited other positive aspects of the contract. They said UCSO deputies are well trained; often attend school and community events; seem to want to be assigned to Indian Trail; and care about providing the community with good service. Interviewees also expressed approval for many of the technical aspects of the current service contract. For example, the town gets financial credit for deputies on long-term disability (until they can be replaced); deputies from the non-contract patrol zones near Indian Trail provide back-up or primary emergency response if a contract deputy is not available; if a patrol vehicle is totaled or severely damaged, it is replaced at no additional cost to Indian Trail; and deputies are supplied with first-class equipment.

Those interviewed by PERF also saw some drawbacks to dropping the contract with the Sheriff's Office and creating a stand-alone town police department. Some felt that elected officials might get too involved in trying to micro-manage the police department. There was a desire to keep the police independent from the day-to-day politics of the town, something that the current contract accomplishes. UCSO deputies are still responsive to the community, it is thought, because the head of law enforcement—the sheriff—is an elected official who is accountable to the community.

There is a general view that the current contract provides Indian Trail with a good value for the money spent, especially in comparison to the cost of services and the size of the departments in Stallings and Monroe. Several interviewees thought a town police department would be top heavy with command ranks that are not needed with the contract.

The general consensus is that the town gets a better deal keeping its contract with the UCSO than it would by having its own police department. No one saw an urgent need to create a town department, at least over the next five years.

#### Issues

Interviewees did identify a number of issues about the current contract arrangement, but they were minor in nature and not severe enough to generate a negative view of the Sheriff's Office. For example, in the past, some town officials thought there was inadequate communication between the deputies assigned to Indian Trail and elected officials. There was concern that town leaders did not know what was going on with regard to crime and did not have enough opportunity for input or review. This concern seems to have been rectified of late, with the

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Indian Trail commanding lieutenant now making routine reports and presentations to the Town Council.

Some expressed concern that town leaders sometimes feel like outsiders looking in with regard to establishing policing priorities for Indian Trail and deciding how tax dollars were being spent. They felt that they had no say in who polices the town, as the UCSO ultimately decides who is assigned to the contract. Still, there is wide approval of the attitude, professionalism, and training of the deputies who work in Indian Trail.

Another area of some concern involved the enforcement of town ordinances. Some felt that there had been reluctance on the part of contract deputies to perform code enforcement and issue civil citations. Recently, however, deputies assigned to Indian Trail have been enforcing animal control and other ordinances.

While generally satisfied with the current contractual arrangement, Indian Trail officials did consistently express concern over the level of police service provided to the town and, in some instances, the speed with which service is delivered. Many interviewees want greater police visibility. A repeated concern was the response time it takes for a crash investigation to take place. Until recently, the only qualified accident investigators for Indian Trail were troopers assigned to the North Carolina State Highway Patrol. Typically, only two troopers are on duty for the Union County area at any one time. If they are occupied on other tasks, such as a previous crash investigation, it can be several hours before the troopers can respond to a crash in Indian Trail and complete the investigation. (Crashes involving serious injuries are responded to promptly regardless of whether a trooper is immediately available or not. In these cases, deputies render first aid and summon ambulances for medical treatment and transport to the hospital, if needed. Still, the deputies have to remain on the scene and direct traffic around the crash until a trooper arrives.) The Sheriff's Office recently addressed this concern by training several of the deputies assigned to Indian Trail as crash investigators and providing them with crash investigation software. These steps have substantially reduced the waiting time for Indian Trail residents involved in crashes that require investigation.

Interviewees were asked about the public safety problems in their community. They cited increased traffic congestion in general and especially the still-unknown impact of three major road construction projects, including the new bypass, upgrading U.S. 74, and widening Old Charlotte/Old Monroe Road. Once it begins, construction will be messy, and when the three projects are completed, the town will, in effect, be divided into three discrete geographic sections. There was also some concern over whether the new and planned recreational

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facilities—including the movie theater, baseball complex, basketball/volleyball courts, and ice rink—would bring substantial numbers of non-residents into Indian Trail, with the possibility of increased crime and traffic congestion.

## **The Nature of Patrol Work in Indian Trail**

Sheriff's deputies who patrol in Indian Trail spend their time responding to calls for service from the public, engaging in self-initiated activity such as vehicle stops and preventive patrols, and performing a variety of administrative tasks. Most members of the public in Indian Trail request police service by calling the Union County Emergency Communications Center (C-COM), although some may hail a deputy in the field or use the phone at the Indian Trail police sub-station. Deputies responding to calls for service (CFS) may handle the incident informally, write a report about the incident if necessary (usually when their preliminary investigation indicates that a crime has been committed), or, when circumstances warrant, make an arrest.

Self-initiated activity describes deputies' proactive work. Deputies may initiate an action because they see suspicious behavior or a traffic violation. They may conduct a follow-up investigation to gather more information on a previous case, or they may look for suspects with outstanding warrants. Deputies may also engage the community, either formally through neighborhood meetings or informally through business checks or other outreach efforts. These are discretionary activities; the deputy decides when and where to begin these encounters. The time spent on self-initiated activities is partially dependent on how busy the deputy is with calls for service. Self-initiated work also is dependent on the availability of appropriate targets of opportunity.

Responding to calls for service and engaging in self-initiated activity are both key parts of patrol work. A major difference is that a law enforcement agency has little control over when calls for service are received by the department. Residents call the police when they want police service, and they usually expect the prompt arrival of a uniformed officer or deputy. Some departments exert some influence on workload by separating urgent calls (necessitating an immediate, high-priority response) from non-urgent calls that may permit a delayed response. But the times of day or days of the week when calls originate cannot be controlled by the police. In contrast, self-initiated work is started by deputies when they are not responding to calls or otherwise assigned.

### ***Indian Trail Deputies' Activity Analysis***

The Union County Sheriff's Office provided a database of all dispatch records for activity in Indian Trail for the 12-month period from October 1, 2013, through September 30, 2014. There

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was a total of 49,251 records: 23,551 (48%) were calls for service responses, and 25,700 (52%) were self-initiated activities (recorded when a deputy notifies Communications that he or she has begun an activity).

The calls for service records included 2,501 records that were duplicates or which were cancelled before a deputy could be dispatched, leaving 21,050 valid CFS records. Of the self-initiated records, only 49 were invalid, resulting in 25,651 valid records.

Among the 21,050 CFS records analyzed, a UCSO deputy assigned to Indian Trail was the first dispatched unit for 75% of the incidents. The table below shows the primary units, by jurisdiction, which answered calls for service in Indian Trail during the 12-month period.

**Primary Unit Responding to Calls for Service in Indian Trail  
October 1, 2013 – September 30, 2014**

Units	Responses	Percent of Total
Indian Trail Deputies (UCSO)	15,793	75.0%
Other UCSO Deputies	3,580	17.0%
NC State Highway Patrol	1,351	6.4%
Lake Park Contract Deputy	210	1.0%
Weddington Contract Deputy	54	0.3%
Stallings Police Department	32	0.2%
Monroe Police Department	14	0.1%
Wesley Chapel Contract Deputy	11	0.1%
Marvin Contract Deputy	3	<0.1%
Waxhaw Police Department	2	<0.1%
Total CFS	21,050	

Indian Trail contract deputies get substantial help from non-contract units, especially from other Union County Sheriff's deputies and North Carolina State troopers. Overall, a unit other than the contract deputies is the primary responder to one out of every four calls for police service in Indian Trail.

## Calls for Service

The next table shows the most frequent types of calls for service response in Indian Trail, from both Indian Trail contract deputies and other units, during the 12 month study period.

Indian Trail Deputies		Other Units	
Call Type	Number	Call Type	Number
ALARMS LAW	2,237	ACCIDENT PD COUNTY NO EMERGENCY MEDICAL DISPATCH (EMD)	961
DISTURBANCE OR NUISANCE	1,211	ALARMS LAW	531
DOMESTIC DISTURBANCE	1,149	BOLO	495
911 HANG UP	828	ACCIDENT EMD	208
SUSPICIOUS PERSON	649	911 HANG UP	202
CALL BY PHONE	638	DISTURBANCE OR NUISANCE	198
SUSPICIOUS VEHICLE	631	DOMESTIC DISTURBANCE	187
LARCENY-THEFT	590	ANIMAL COMPLAINT	185
ANIMAL COMPLAINT	397	SUSPICIOUS PERSON	139
SUSPICIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES	343	CALL BY PHONE	136
NOISE COMPLAINT	340	MOTORIST ASSIST	136

As this table illustrates, Indian Trail contract deputies focus much of their time on responding to calls involving possible criminal behavior and quality-of-life concerns. Outside units, while responding to some of the same types of calls for service, are much more likely to be the primary responders to vehicle accidents.

The most frequent type of call that Indian Trail contract deputies responded to was an alarm. This is not surprising since many Indian Trail residents commute to Charlotte and use alarms to help protect their homes while they are away. As is typical across the country, the vast majority of these calls are false alarms.

**Recommendation:** *The Town should reconsider its Alarm Ordinance, Chapter 93. Consideration should be given to requiring all alarm companies to perform monitoring services and to verify if the alarm is valid. Additionally, the Town should consider discontinuing law enforcement response after a set number of false alarms. Five in a 12-month period is often found in comparable jurisdictions' alarm ordinances. Re-instatement of response should require certification that the alarm holder has completed*

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*an "Alarm User Awareness Class"<sup>8</sup> in the interval between notification of alarm discontinuance and request for re-instatement.*

Two other call types frequently handled by Indian Trail deputies also involve possible criminal behavior: "Domestic Disturbance" (third most common) and "Larceny-Theft." These types of calls are also typical of towns like Indian Trail.

Other frequent call types handled by Indian Trail deputies are quality-of-life issues in which residents are concerned about the behavior of others. "Suspicious Subjects," "Call By Phone," "Animal Complaints," "Suspicious Vehicles," "Suspicious Circumstances," and "Noise Complaints" all fall into this category. Again, these types of calls are typical of communities similar to Indian Trail.

The call type "Call by Phone" is used when someone wants to talk to a deputy. Many of these calls are quickly resolved information requests. Some require the deputy to respond to the caller's address.

Another frequent call handled by Indian Trail deputies is "911 Hang Up" (fourth most common during the review period). These calls require a police response until they can be verified as unnecessary. Dispatch centers call back to the number to determine if the call was in error. In some instances, someone may call 911 and be forced by another person to hang up before the call can be completed. In these instances, a police response is essential.

As illustrated in the table above, vehicle accidents are the most frequent call for service in which the primary responding unit is not an Indian Trail contract deputy. Many of these accident calls are handled by troopers from the North Carolina State Highway Patrol, who often have experience and expertise in these types of incidents.

The current contract with the Union County Sheriff's Office provides for this type of flexibility in responding to calls for service. That is, deputies assigned to the Indian Trail community primarily respond to possible criminal behavior and quality-of-life concerns, while other personnel are available to handle more routine matters such as vehicle accidents. However, the long wait for post-crash investigations is resulting in Indian Trail deputies being trained to perform crash investigations.

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<sup>8</sup> Section 93(1) of Indian Trail's Alarm Ordinance defines an "Alarm User Awareness Class" as a class conducted for the purpose of educating alarm users about the responsible use, operation, and maintenance of alarm systems and the problems created by false alarms.

## Self-Initiated Activity

The next table shows the most frequent activity types recorded for self-initiated activities for the period from October 1, 2013 through September 30, 2014.

Indian Trail Deputies		Other Units	
Activity Type	Number	Activity Type	Number
PREVENTIVE PATROL	11,437	PREVENTIVE PATROL	933
BUSINESS CHECK	3,752	TRAFFIC STOP	673
TRAFFIC STOP	3,044	BUSINESS CHECK	448
FOLLOW-UP INVESTIGATION	380	SERVE WARRANT	398
SUSPICIOUS VEHICLE	379	FOLLOW-UP INVESTIGATION	216
SERVE WARRANT	346	SERVE CIVIL PAPER	202
RESIDENTIAL CHECK	308	INVESTIGATION	179
SERVE CRIMINAL/CIVIL SUBPOENA	177	ANIMAL COMPLAINT SERVICE CALL LAW	176
RADAR PATROL INCLUDING TRAIN	155	SERVE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ORDER	134
INVESTIGATION	149	SERVE EVICTION NOTICE	113
SUSPICIOUS PERSON	142	SUSPICIOUS VEHICLE	85

Of the valid self-initiated records, the vast majority—21,473, or 84%—show an Indian Trail contract deputy as the primary initiating unit. This is not surprising, since the Indian Trail deputies are assigned specifically to the community. Still, fully 16% of the remaining self-initiated episodes were begun by a UCSO deputy assigned to another unit—a significant contribution by the contracting agency. Less than 1% of these events were started by units outside the UCSO.

“Preventive Patrol” occurs when a deputy patrols a particular neighborhood and records the time spent there. Indian Trail has many subdivisions composed of cul-de-sacs and non-through streets with limited access from major roads. These neighborhood patrols account for 53% of Indian Trail deputies’ self-initiated work. Other frequent self-initiated activities are business checks and traffic stops, which account for 18% and 14%, respectively, of their self-initiated work. These three activity types account for a total of 85% of the contract deputies’ recorded self-initiated activities.

Preventive patrol, along with traffic stops and business checks, were also the leading self-initiated activity for units other than Indian Trail deputies, accounting for 49% of their self-initiated activity. Significantly, non-contract UCSO deputies devoted substantial time—20% of their self-initiated work—to serving papers, including warrants, civil papers, domestic violence

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orders of protection, and eviction notices. Their work in these areas likely frees up time for the Indian Trail deputies to devote to preventive patrol, business checks, and other community outreach efforts.

### **Average Workload**

A vital part of determining if a jurisdiction's law enforcement staffing is sufficient is to examine the personnel time available versus the time needed to handle the calls for service workload. As described earlier, calls for service from the public strongly influence patrol staffing since people expect that a uniformed officer or deputy will promptly respond to their request for service. Self-initiated activity can be deferred to times when the CFS workload is lighter.

PERF uses an algorithm to create matrices that show the average time consumed by calls for service over the course of a week, by hour of the day, and by day of the week. The total average time spent on calls for service includes the time spent by each deputy on each call from the time the deputy was dispatched until the deputy indicated to the dispatcher that he or she completed, or "cleared," the call. The call time was allocated to the hour block in which it occurred. For example, if the deputy was dispatched at 1045 hours and cleared the call 35 minutes later at 1120 hours, 15 minutes were allocated to the 1000 – 1059 time block and 20 minutes were allocated to the 1100 to 1159 time block. The total amount of time spent on calls for service during a given time period is then averaged by week, day, and hour. A key requirement to perform these calculations is for each record to have the time the deputy was dispatched to the call and the time the deputy cleared the call. Records also need to show whether a back-up unit also responded to the call, since that adds to the total time required to handle the call.

**The following table shows the average hours spent on calls for service, by hour of the day and day of the week, by all Indian Trail contract deputies from October 1, 2013 through September 30, 2014. The table shows only the time spent by contract deputies when they were either the primary unit or a back-up unit. Units other than Indian Trail contract deputies are excluded from this analysis.**

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**Average Number of Hours Indian Trail Deputies Spent  
Responding to Calls for Service, by Hour of the Day and Day of the Week  
October 1, 2013 – September 30, 2014**

Hour	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
0000	1.6	1.6	1.5	1.9	2.0	1.6	2.7
0100	3.4	1.0	1.4	1.6	1.3	1.3	2.2
0200	2.4	0.7	1.5	1.1	0.6	1.1	1.5
0300	1.9	0.6	1.0	0.7	0.6	0.8	1.2
0400	1.3	0.3	1.2	0.9	0.5	0.5	1.0
0500	1.0	0.3	0.9	1.2	0.6	0.2	0.8
0600	0.5	0.5	1.1	1.3	0.7	0.6	0.6
0700	0.5	0.7	1.7	1.3	1.3	0.8	0.9
0800	0.9	1.0	2.2	1.9	1.6	1.7	1.1
0900	1.1	1.7	2.1	2.1	1.7	1.7	1.2
1000	1.7	1.6	2.0	2.1	2.0	1.9	1.7
1100	1.9	1.9	2.2	1.5	2.1	2.4	2.4
1200	1.9	1.8	2.4	1.8	2.3	2.1	2.7
1300	2.4	2.4	3.0	1.9	2.9	2.6	2.7
1400	2.8	2.8	3.1	2.8	3.2	2.9	2.3
1500	3.6	2.5	3.7	2.9	3.3	2.9	2.2
1600	3.5	3.0	2.9	3.0	3.5	3.0	3.0
1700	3.1	4.5	2.8	2.8	3.7	2.7	3.3
1800	3.0	4.1	2.9	3.2	3.6	2.9	2.7
1900	2.6	3.3	3.2	3.2	3.8	3.4	2.4
2000	2.3	2.8	3.4	2.6	3.7	2.4	2.7
2100	2.5	2.5	2.8	2.8	2.9	2.7	3.2
2200	1.9	2.3	2.8	2.9	2.6	2.9	3.2
2300	1.8	1.9	2.3	2.5	2.3	2.3	3.1

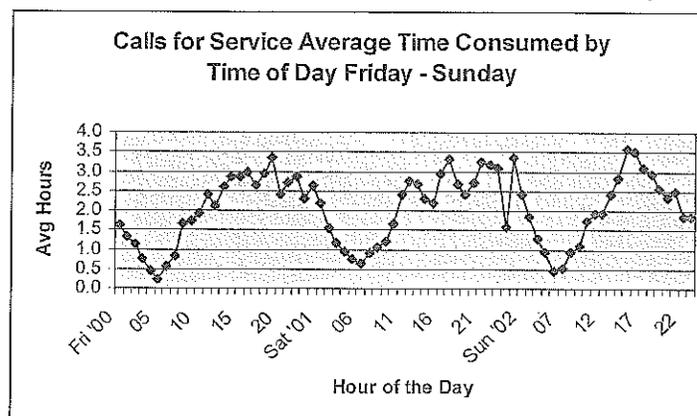
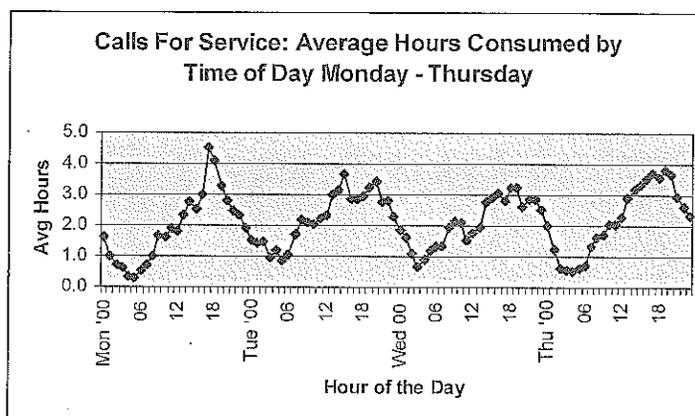
For example, during the hour from midnight to 1 a.m. on Sundays, all of the deputies on duty averaged a combined total of 1.6 hours on calls for service. During the next hour, from 1 a.m. to 2 a.m. on Sundays, the CFS workload increased dramatically, to an average of 3.4 hours for all deputies on duty. From 2 a.m. to 3 a.m. on Sundays, the average was 2.6 hours. These data reflect increased activity typical of early Sunday mornings (after Saturday nights). Shaded blocks represent peak CFS work times: 3.5 hours or more during each one-hour block.

Interestingly, Monday evenings from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m., and Thursdays from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m., represented some of the busiest time periods for Indian Trail deputies.

This table does not directly reflect how busy deputies are at various times, because the number of deputies on duty varies by time of day and day of week. Rather, this table provides an idea of the total demand for deputy CFS time at various times of the day and week. The average number of hours per week Indian Trail deputies spent on handling calls for service is 351 hours.

The following charts presents the same data over the course of the entire week, first for week days, Monday through Thursday, and then for weekends, Friday through Sunday.

**Average Number of Hours Indian Trail Deputies Spent  
Responding to Calls for Service  
October 1, 2013 – September 30, 2014**



On each day of the week, the average CFS time declines during the early morning hours and then increases to peaks in the early evening hours. This is typical of residential, suburban jurisdictions similar to Indian Trail.

**Deputy Scheduling**

Indian Trial contract deputies work a variety of shifts and times. Most patrol deputies work 12-hour shifts from 4:45 a.m. to 4:45 p.m., or from 4:45 p.m. to 4:45 a.m. Traffic control deputies also work 12-hour shift on varying days. A one-deputy overlap is scheduled on some days from 12 noon to 12 midnight. Both the crash investigator deputy and the community services deputy

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typically work day shifts on week days. The two sergeants are scheduled so one is on-duty daily from 12 noon to midnight. When a sergeant is not present, supervision is available from non-contract UCSO supervisors working in adjacent areas. The schedule repeats every two weeks. It is designed to maximize the number of personnel available especially during highest work periods. The table below shows the average deputies scheduled by hour of the day and day of the week, taking into account the two-week schedule. It includes all of the contract deputies, sergeants, and the crash investigator.

**Average Number of Indian Trail Deputies Scheduled,  
by Hour of the Day and Day of the Week  
October 1, 2013 – September 30, 2014**

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
0000	5.5	5.5	4.0	4.0	4.0	6.5	5.0
0100	5.5	5.5	4.0	4.0	4.0	6.5	5.0
0200	4.5	4.5	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0
0300	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0
0400	1.8	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9
0500	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5
0600	2.5	3.5	3.5	2.5	3.5	3.5	2.5
0700	2.5	3.5	3.5	2.5	3.5	3.5	2.5
0800	2.5	4.5	4.5	3.5	4.5	4.5	2.5
0900	2.5	5.5	7.0	4.5	5.5	5.5	2.5
1000	2.5	5.5	7.0	4.5	5.5	5.5	2.5
1100	2.5	5.5	7.0	4.5	5.5	5.5	2.5
1200	3.5	6.5	8.0	7.0	7.0	7.0	3.5
1300	3.5	6.5	8.0	7.0	7.0	7.0	3.5
1400	4.5	7.5	9.0	8.0	10.5	9.0	4.5
1500	6.0	7.5	9.0	8.0	10.5	9.0	6.0
1600	6.1	7.1	8.6	8.1	10.1	8.6	6.4
1700	6.5	5.5	7.0	7.8	8.5	7.0	6.5
1800	6.5	5.0	6.5	6.8	8.0	6.5	6.5
1900	6.5	5.0	6.5	6.5	8.0	6.5	6.5
2000	6.5	5.0	6.5	6.5	8.0	6.5	6.5
2100	6.5	5.0	5.0	6.5	8.0	6.5	6.5
2200	6.5	5.0	5.0	6.5	8.0	6.5	6.5
2300	6.5	5.0	5.0	6.5	8.0	6.5	6.5

While this table represents the number of deputies scheduled, the actual number on duty on any given day varies because of vacations, other leave time, illness, training, and special events. Other studies performed by PERF indicate that, for departments similar to Indian Trail, the average show-up rate is approximately 80%. In other words, an average of 20% of those deputies scheduled on any given shift will likely be on leave or otherwise unavailable. The

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following table shows the average number of Indian Trail deputy-hours available for duty, taking into account the common, 20% rate of absences.

**Average Number of Indian Trail Deputies on Duty,  
by Hour of the Day and Day of the Week  
October 1, 2013 – September 30, 2014**

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
0000	4.4	4.4	3.2	3.2	3.2	5.2	4.0
0100	4.4	4.4	3.2	3.2	3.2	5.2	4.0
0200	3.6	3.6	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4
0300	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4
0400	1.4	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3
0500	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
0600	2.0	2.8	2.8	2.0	2.8	2.8	2.0
0700	2.0	2.8	2.8	2.0	2.8	2.8	2.0
0800	2.0	3.6	3.6	2.8	3.6	3.6	2.0
0900	2.0	4.4	5.6	3.6	4.4	4.4	2.0
1000	2.0	4.4	5.6	3.6	4.4	4.4	2.0
1100	2.0	4.4	5.6	3.6	4.4	4.4	2.0
1200	2.8	5.2	6.4	5.6	5.6	5.6	2.8
1300	2.8	5.2	6.4	5.6	5.6	5.6	2.8
1400	3.6	6.0	7.2	6.4	8.4	7.2	3.6
1500	4.8	6.0	7.2	6.4	8.4	7.2	4.8
1600	4.9	5.7	6.9	6.5	8.1	6.9	5.1
1700	5.2	4.4	5.6	6.2	6.8	5.6	5.2
1800	5.2	4.0	5.2	5.4	6.4	5.2	5.2
1900	5.2	4.0	5.2	5.2	6.4	5.2	5.2
2000	5.2	4.0	5.2	5.2	6.4	5.2	5.2
2100	5.2	4.0	4.0	5.2	6.4	5.2	5.2
2200	5.2	4.0	4.0	5.2	6.4	5.2	5.2
2300	5.2	4.0	4.0	5.2	6.4	5.2	5.2

**Average Time Consumed by Calls for Service**

The next step in the workload analysis is to compare the deputy resources available to the calls for service workload. For this analysis, all of the deputies assigned to Indian Trail, including the sergeants, are incorporated because the data indicate that all of the units assist in handling calls for service. The next table shows the percent of the average available deputy's time that is spent responding to calls for service, for each hour of the day and each day of the week.

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**Average Percent of Indian Trail Deputy Time Spent Responding to Calls for Service,  
by Hour of the Day and Day of the Week  
October 1, 2013 – September 30, 2014**

Average Time Consumed	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
0000	36.4%	36.9%	47.2%	58.5%	61.8%	31.4%	66.5%
0100	76.2%	23.1%	45.1%	51.1%	39.1%	25.5%	54.6%
0200	67.3%	19.4%	60.9%	45.5%	26.4%	46.5%	63.9%
0300	77.4%	25.2%	40.3%	27.8%	24.2%	31.8%	48.0%
0400	91.3%	14.3%	51.7%	38.9%	22.0%	20.0%	41.7%
0500	47.8%	14.3%	43.8%	59.6%	30.6%	10.5%	38.4%
0600	22.9%	19.3%	38.1%	65.8%	25.6%	20.1%	31.7%
0700	26.5%	26.1%	61.1%	67.3%	47.5%	30.1%	44.8%
0800	47.2%	27.3%	60.3%	69.3%	45.0%	46.5%	53.2%
0900	54.5%	38.4%	37.8%	58.9%	38.5%	39.3%	59.6%
1000	87.0%	37.1%	36.3%	58.1%	46.3%	43.5%	82.9%
1100	96.9%	43.0%	40.1%	42.0%	46.7%	55.1%	100.0%
1200	68.9%	35.1%	36.7%	31.6%	40.9%	37.6%	97.8%
1300	86.0%	45.2%	46.6%	34.8%	51.5%	46.3%	95.1%
1400	78.1%	46.2%	43.4%	43.0%	38.0%	39.9%	64.1%
1500	74.4%	42.1%	51.2%	45.1%	39.5%	40.0%	45.8%
1600	71.4%	52.4%	41.4%	46.8%	43.7%	43.4%	58.0%
1700	59.8%	100.0%	50.7%	45.6%	54.6%	47.4%	63.9%
1800	56.7%	100.0%	56.5%	59.7%	56.0%	56.5%	51.2%
1900	49.7%	82.4%	62.1%	62.2%	59.6%	64.5%	46.8%
2000	45.1%	70.3%	65.8%	50.4%	57.6%	46.2%	52.5%
2100	47.6%	61.6%	69.5%	54.8%	45.8%	52.1%	62.3%
2200	35.9%	58.4%	70.4%	55.3%	40.6%	55.1%	60.7%
2300	35.4%	47.1%	57.1%	48.5%	36.1%	44.2%	59.6%

Overall, Indian Trail deputies spend about 50% of their available time responding to calls for service, although the percentage varies widely depending upon the hour or the day and the day of the week. The shaded areas represent time periods in which deputies spend almost all of their time—85% or higher—on calls for service. There are three time blocks—on Monday evenings and mid-day Saturday—when 100% of the deputies’ time is spent on calls for service. It is likely that during these periods, Indian Trail deputies are getting assistance from other units that is not being precisely recorded.

There are no commonly accepted standards for how much patrol time law enforcement personnel should spend on handling calls for service. At one time, it was expected that deputies would spend about equal portions of their time on calls for service, self-initiated activities and routine

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patrol. Today, many agencies want more of their officers' time to be devoted to proactive, community policing activities. This altered that expectation and led to many variations depending upon local considerations and priorities.

In many jurisdictions, how patrol time is spent is not closely tracked or subject to a formal target. PERF's research in a number of jurisdictions has found wide variations in targets for patrol time use.

- Kansas City, MO; has a standard of 35% of an officer's time being devoted to responding to calls for service.
- Chandler, AZ, (a large Phoenix suburb) set a standard of 40%.
- West Palm Beach, FL, set a target of 45%.
- Tallahassee, FL, with an actual figure of 67%, set a target to reduce calls-for-service time to 50%.
- In San Francisco, CA, the time consumed by calls for service varied in each of the city's 10 police districts, from a low of 30% to a high of just over 50%.
- Memphis, TN, had an average of 42% of patrol officer time consumed by calls for service.
- Gwinnett County, GA, (a suburban area northeast of Atlanta) had different averages in its patrol districts, ranging from 38% to 46%.
- Provo, UT, had 55% of patrol time consumed by calls for service.
- Sparks, NV, had an average of 34% of officers' time spent on calls for service.

Overall, the Indian Trail figure of 50% of deputies' time spent on calls for service appears to be slightly higher than average, when compared with other jurisdictions that PERF has studied.

Focusing on the shaded time blocks in the table above—those with more than 85% of the available time consumed by calls for service—does reveal a concern. These peaks suggest that overall service levels may be degraded and emergency response slowed when officers are spending almost all of their time on calls for service. During these times, Indian Trail likely must rely on other, non-contract resources for assistance.

One option for addressing this issue would be to add two deputies to the Indian Trail contract, working opposing schedules so that coverage is increased daily from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. The table below shows the impact of adding two contract deputies to the current calls-for-service workload. (It should be noted that the resource level added is not one hour of deputy time daily from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., but 0.8 hours, taking into account the availability rate.)

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**Average Percent of Indian Trail Deputy Time Spent Responding to Calls for Service,  
with Two Additional Deputies, by Hour of the Day and Day of the Week  
October 1, 2013 – September 30, 2014**

Average Time Consumed							
	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
0000	36.4%	36.9%	47.2%	58.5%	61.8%	31.4%	66.5%
0100	76.2%	23.1%	45.1%	51.1%	39.1%	25.5%	54.6%
0200	67.3%	19.4%	60.9%	45.5%	26.4%	46.5%	63.9%
0300	77.4%	25.2%	40.3%	27.8%	24.2%	31.8%	48.0%
0400	91.3%	14.3%	51.7%	38.9%	22.0%	20.0%	41.7%
0500	47.8%	14.3%	43.8%	59.6%	30.6%	10.5%	38.4%
0600	22.9%	19.3%	38.1%	65.8%	25.6%	20.1%	31.7%
0700	26.5%	26.1%	61.1%	67.3%	47.5%	30.1%	44.8%
0800	47.2%	27.3%	60.3%	69.3%	45.0%	46.5%	53.2%
0900	39.0%	32.5%	33.0%	48.2%	32.6%	33.2%	42.6%
1000	62.2%	31.4%	31.8%	47.6%	39.1%	36.8%	59.2%
1100	69.2%	36.4%	35.1%	34.3%	39.6%	46.6%	86.0%
1200	53.6%	30.4%	32.7%	27.7%	35.8%	32.9%	76.0%
1300	66.9%	39.2%	41.4%	30.5%	45.0%	40.5%	74.0%
1400	63.9%	40.8%	39.1%	38.3%	34.7%	35.9%	52.4%
1500	63.8%	37.2%	46.1%	40.1%	36.1%	36.0%	39.3%
1600	61.4%	45.9%	37.1%	41.7%	39.8%	38.9%	50.1%
1700	51.8%	86.8%	44.3%	40.4%	48.8%	41.5%	55.4%
1800	49.2%	85.1%	48.9%	52.0%	49.8%	49.0%	44.3%
1900	43.1%	68.6%	53.9%	53.9%	53.0%	55.9%	40.5%
2000	39.1%	58.6%	57.0%	43.7%	51.2%	40.0%	45.5%
2100	47.6%	61.6%	69.5%	54.8%	45.8%	52.1%	62.3%
2200	35.9%	58.4%	70.4%	55.3%	40.6%	55.1%	60.7%
2300	35.4%	47.1%	57.1%	48.5%	36.1%	44.2%	59.6%

With the addition of two deputies, the overall average amount of deputies' time spent on calls for service would be reduced from 50% to 46%. This would bring Indian Trail closer in line with other jurisdictions. In addition, the addition of two deputies would eliminate any time blocks in which 100% of available deputies' time is spent on handling calls for service, such as those on Saturday and Monday. It would also reduce, from nine to four, the number of hours each week in which the percentage of deputies' time spent on calls for service was 85% or higher (the shaded areas in the above tables). Finally, these additional resources not only would ease the strain on emergency resources during key periods, but also would create more time for self-initiated activities. Carving out more time for proactive work by Indian Trail deputies can ultimately serve to prevent crime and, therefore, reduce calls for service in the long term. The additional cost for two more deputies would be, at current rates, \$161,486.

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Another option would be to add a third deputy. This deputy would be scheduled to work Friday-Saturday-Sunday-Monday on ten hour shifts from 10 am to 10 pm. Again, the added result is .8 deputy hours taking into account the 80% show-up rate. The results of this addition are shown in the table below.

**Average Percent of Indian Trail Deputy Time Spent Responding to Calls for Service,  
with Three Additional Deputies, by Hour of the Day and Day of the Week**

**October 1, 2013 – September 30, 2014**

Average Time Consumed	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
0000	36.4%	36.9%	47.2%	58.5%	61.8%	31.4%	66.5%
0100	76.2%	23.1%	45.1%	51.1%	39.1%	25.5%	54.6%
0200	67.3%	19.4%	60.9%	45.5%	26.4%	46.5%	63.9%
0300	77.4%	25.2%	40.3%	27.8%	24.2%	31.8%	48.0%
0400	91.3%	14.3%	51.7%	38.9%	22.0%	20.0%	41.7%
0500	47.8%	14.3%	43.8%	59.6%	30.6%	10.5%	38.4%
0600	22.9%	19.3%	38.1%	65.8%	25.6%	20.1%	31.7%
0700	26.5%	26.1%	61.1%	67.3%	47.5%	30.1%	44.8%
0800	47.2%	27.3%	60.3%	69.3%	45.0%	46.5%	53.2%
0900	39.0%	32.5%	33.0%	48.2%	32.6%	33.2%	42.6%
1000	48.4%	27.2%	31.8%	47.6%	39.1%	31.9%	46.1%
1100	53.8%	31.6%	35.1%	34.3%	39.6%	40.4%	66.9%
1200	43.8%	26.8%	32.7%	27.7%	35.8%	29.2%	62.2%
1300	54.7%	34.6%	41.4%	30.5%	45.0%	36.0%	60.5%
1400	54.1%	36.5%	39.1%	38.3%	34.7%	32.7%	44.4%
1500	55.8%	33.3%	46.1%	40.1%	36.1%	32.7%	34.3%
1600	53.9%	40.9%	37.1%	41.7%	39.8%	35.2%	44.2%
1700	45.7%	75.2%	44.3%	40.4%	48.8%	36.9%	48.9%
1800	43.4%	73.0%	48.9%	52.0%	49.8%	43.2%	39.1%
1900	38.0%	58.8%	53.9%	53.9%	53.0%	49.3%	35.8%
2000	39.1%	58.6%	57.0%	43.7%	51.2%	40.0%	45.5%
2100	47.6%	61.6%	69.5%	54.8%	45.8%	52.1%	62.3%
2200	35.9%	58.4%	70.4%	55.3%	40.6%	55.1%	60.7%
2300	35.4%	47.1%	57.1%	48.5%	36.1%	44.2%	59.6%

This option would eliminate all but one time block over 85% average time consumed. It would reduce the overall average time consumed to 44%. The cost of three additional deputies would be \$242,229.

A third option would be to adjust the current schedule so that more of the existing deputies are working during the problem periods. This, however, leads to problems at other times since shifting existing deputies from other times results in less resources available then. For the most part the existing schedule matches the calls for service workload. Moving deputies from the

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midnight shift to the day shift to address the peaks leaves the number of deputies so low that back-up would not be readily available creating safety problems.

**Recommendation:** *Two deputies should be added to the Indian Trail contract for FY 2015 – 2016 to improve the ratio of time consumed to deputy resources available. The additional cost, based on current rates, would be \$161,486. This would reduce the 85% time blocks from nine to four. The overall time consumed would be reduced from an average of 50% to 46% providing additional time for proactive activity and community engagement. Modifying the existing schedule would create problems during the times that deputies would be moved from. Adding a third deputy (bringing the total additional cost to \$242,229) provides only a modest benefit for the additional expenditure. A third deputy would reduce the time blocks of 85% or more average time consumed by calls for service from four to one. Short term workload peaks, of two or three hours, are tolerable in a scheduling system as long as additional resources are available outside the jurisdiction to assist when needed. Indian Trail can draw on the resources of non-contract UCSO deputies when needed to cover workload peaks.*

## Projected Personnel Needs

Over the next several years there will be significant change in Indian Trail. New and expanded housing communities, multi-family dwellings, increased commercial and retail construction, and expanded parks and recreational facilities will all lead to continued growth. This growth will likely fuel an increased demand for police services, but it is unlikely that the basic residential, commuter-community nature of Indian Trail will change. Low taxes, good schools, and a superior quality of life will continue to be magnets for new residents and businesses.

One additional factor that will have a major impact—on both residents and law enforcement—is road construction. The new limited-access bypass, the improvements to U.S. 74, and the widening of Old Charlotte/Old Monroe Road will impact police mobility, both during the construction phases and when the new roads are completed.

**Recommendation:** *In order to maintain reasonable response times, adequate back-ups, and some level of deputy identity with the neighborhoods they patrol, Indian Trail contract deputies should be reorganized into distinct geographic districts within the town. Information provided by the UCSO suggests that a three-district configuration could address these issues. A north side, middle (U.S. 74 business corridor), and south side district would allow, with adequate personnel, for mobility using the existing roads*

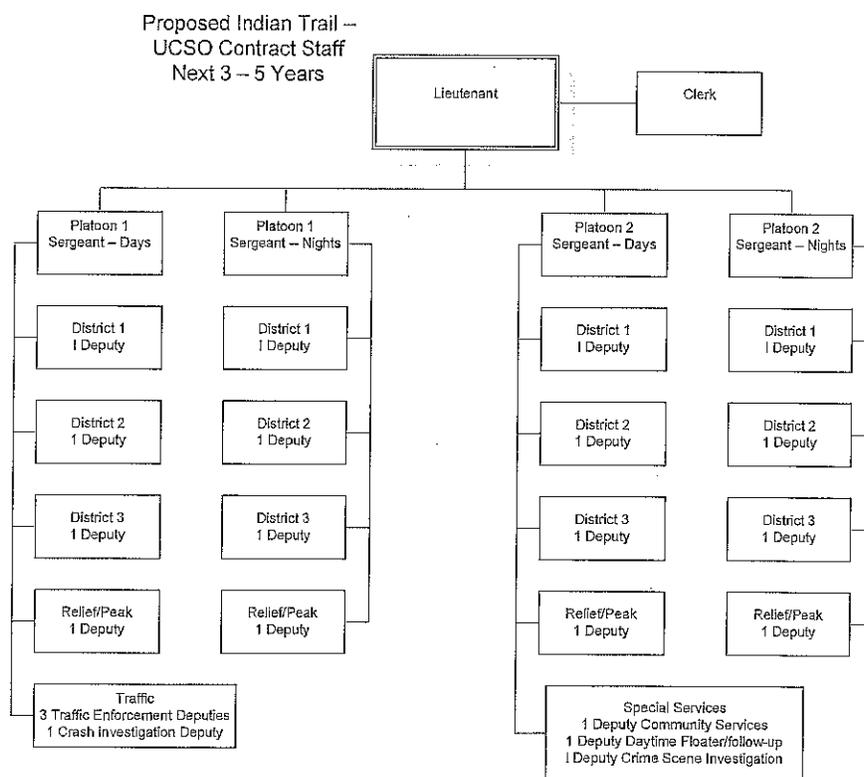
## Police Services Assessment for Indian Trail

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*and also be suitable for the new roads. Such a configuration would have the added benefit of creating neighborhood-based deputies who, during their self-initiated activity time, could focus on issues and concerns for the particular district they are assigned to.*

**In the next 3-5 years, as Indian Trail continues to grow, it is expected that the number of sworn personnel needed to provide high-quality police services under the three-district model would total 28.**

The following organizational chart depicts how Indian Trail resources would be configured with this model.



Two patrol platoons would work opposing schedules to provide around-the-clock coverage. When one platoon is working the other would be on days-off.

- During each shift one deputy would be assigned to each district, with a fourth deputy allocated to provide relief or to cover peak workload times.
- Each platoon would have a day sergeant and a night sergeant to provide supervision and provide back-up when needed.
- The Platoon 1 day sergeant would also oversee the traffic section composed of three enforcement deputies and one crash investigator.

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- The Platoon 2 day sergeant would provide oversight for Special Services composed of three deputies: community services officer, day floater/follow-up investigator, and crime scene investigator.
  - Including the Lieutenant, a total of 28 sworn positions are needed for this configuration.
  - The cost, using current contract rates and factoring in the 10% discount for work outside the town<sup>9</sup>, would be \$2,364,680. Additional costs would include a civilian clerk, estimated at \$37,000 a year including salary and fringe benefits, for a total contract cost of \$2,401,680.<sup>10</sup>

Within five to ten years, as growth continues and the demand for police services increases, the town might consider further increasing the contract to include two deputies in each district on each shift. With three districts, two platoons, and two shifts per day the 12 additional deputies would increase to 40 the total number of sworn personnel assigned to the town. The projected cost of this contract, again using current contract rates and factoring in the 10% discount and estimated cost for a civilian clerk, would be \$3,370,596.

The projected need for additional deputies is based on a combination of factors.

- There will be a continuing increase in calls for service workload as a result of additional population because of planned new residential, commercial and recreational development. It is difficult to provide precise estimates of increased workload since the timing of construction is based on decisions by many developers about what makes good business sense to them. Phasing in additional staffing over a number of years will allow Indian Trail to grow its police force as the town grows and prevent a situation where growth overwhelms available police resources.
- The new road networks will decrease police mobility by creating a series of barriers that will make it more difficult for cross-town emergency response. By increasing the staffing in each district, emergency response and back-ups will usually come from within the district.
- Increasing the number of deputies in each district will increase the ability for deputies to conduct more preventive patrol and community engagement in their assigned districts promoting increased contact between neighborhoods and “their” deputies.

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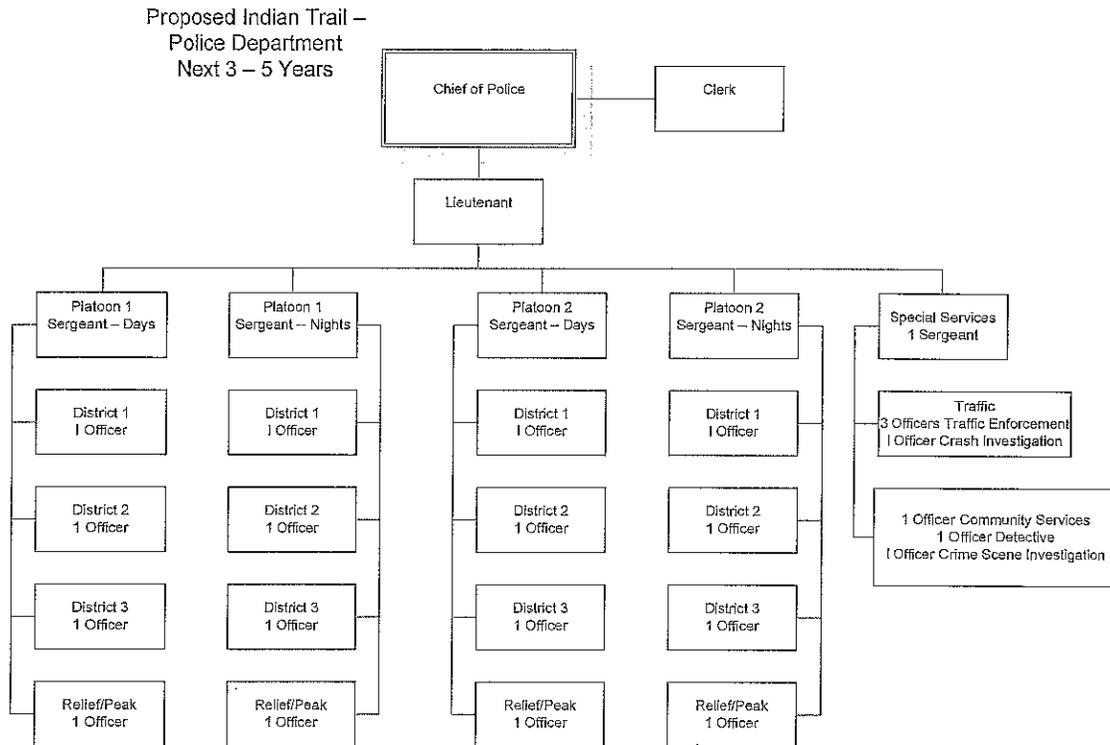
<sup>9</sup> Because contract deputies are sometime called on to perform work outside the town limits, the UCSO discounts the cost of each position by 10%.

<sup>10</sup> This does not take into account increases in the rate at which deputies are charged. These figures are base figures to provide comparisons.

**Recommendation:** *To keep up with continued growth in the town and increased demand for police services, Indian Trail should increase the total number of contract deputies from the current 22 to 28 by 2020. To meet demands beyond that, the town should plan for a total of 40 contract positions by 2025.*

## Another Option: What a Stand-Alone Police Department Might Look Like

Another option for Indian Trail is to establish its own stand-alone police department. The following organizational chart depicts how such a department might be organized in order to provide the same service levels envisioned by the 3- to 5-year contract configuration described above.



The department would be composed of 30 sworn personnel and one civilian clerk. It would be organized into three districts, as in the proposed contract expansion. It would be headed by a chief of police, assisted by a lieutenant. Five sergeants would provide first-line supervision, four for the patrol squads and one for a special services squad composed of a traffic unit (one crash investigator and three traffic enforcement officers), one community services officer, one detective, and one crime scene investigator. The estimated cost for the first year of operation of

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the stand-alone department is \$2,691,455. Assuming that the new department would operate out of the town facility currently used by the contract deputies, start-up costs are estimated at \$1,847,800.

The first year annual cost of a stand-alone department that would need 30 sworn positions to provide service to meet policing needs over the next three to five years would be \$2,691,455. This compares to a cost of \$2,401,680 for a comparable contract (28 deputies) with the Union County Sheriff's Office, a cost savings of \$290,000. Earlier in this report, in the section titled "High-Quality Police Services" the strengths and weakness of contract services is compared to a stand-alone department.

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**Estimated Cost of First Year for Operation of a Stand-Alone Indian Trail Police Department**

The following table shows projects costs for the first year of operation for an Indian Trail Police Department.

**First Year Operating Budget**

Salaries & Wages -- Regular			
Chief of Police	1	\$115,000	\$115,000
Lieutenant	1	\$70,000	\$70,000
Sergeant	5	\$56,000	\$280,000
Patrol Officer	16	\$43,500	\$696,000
Detective	1	\$48,000	\$48,000
Traffic Control Officer	4	\$48,000	\$192,000
Community Resource Officer	1	\$48,000	\$48,000
Crime Scene Officer	1	\$48,000	\$48,000
Total Sworn Salaries and Wages	30		\$1,497,000
Fringe @37% for sworn officers			\$553,890
Clerk	1	\$28,500	\$28,500
Fringe @29% for civilian employees			\$8,265
Salaries & Wages - Overtime			\$15,000
Replacement Uniforms			\$4,000
Training			\$10,000
Medical Expense			\$1,500
Recruitment			\$2,000
Hiring/Selection			\$4,000
Meetings/Events/Travel			\$5,000
Dues/Subscriptions/Periodicals/Manuals			\$1,000
Facility			
-- Electricity			\$12,000
-- Water and Sewer			\$2,000
-- Building Maintenance			\$3,000
Repairs/Maintenance - Equipment			\$7,000
Vehicle Maintenance			\$30,800
Office Supplies			\$6,000
Postage			\$500
Information Technology			\$16,500
Telephone/Communications/Dispatch			\$20,000
Fuel			\$138,500
Guns and Ammunition			\$5,000
Professional Services			\$15,000
Crime Lab Expense			\$8,000
Equipment Rental			\$2,500
Vehicle Replacement Fund			\$222,000
Investigation Expense			\$5,000
Insurance			\$60,000
Miscellaneous			\$7,500
TOTAL			\$2,691,455

### Operating Budget Assumptions

- The budget does not include costs that would be incurred by other Indian Trail town operations such as human resources, payroll, and finance.
- Salary estimates are derived from surrounding jurisdictions, including Monroe, Charlotte-Mecklenburg, and Union County. Specialized positions are budgeted at a higher figure than generalist positions, assuming they would be filled with officers with more training and experience. Salaries are competitive and designed to ensure an Indian Trail Police Department would be an attractive option for both new and lateral officers.
- Fringe benefits include FICA, health insurance contribution, retirement contribution, unemployment insurance, and worker's compensation insurance.
- The budget assumes some annual employee turnover and, therefore, recruitment, hiring, and selection costs are included.
- Facility costs are expected to increase from those currently budgeted due to greater use of the building.
- The budget assumes that dispatch service will continue to be provided by the Union County communications center.
- Fuel is based on an assumption that gas prices will increase to \$3 per gallon, that police vehicles will average 13 miles per gallon (police vehicles idle much more than private vehicles), and that each of the 30 personally assigned vehicles will average 20,000 miles per year.
- A vehicle replacement fund is established to purchase new vehicles at the rate of six per year at a fully equipped cost of \$37,000 each.

### Start-Up Budget

The following table shows estimated start-up costs for a new Indian Trail Police Department.

Patrol Cars		Cost	Units		
	* Marked - New	\$37,000	24	\$888,000	
	* Marked - Reconditioned	\$20,000	8	\$160,000	
	* Unmarked -New	\$37,000	2	\$74,000	
Sub-total			34		\$1,122,000
Uniforms and Equipment					
	* Each officer	\$4,200	30		\$126,000
Additional Equipment					
					\$50,000
Information Technology					
					\$100,000
Sub-Total					\$1,398,000
Contingency Fund @ 20%					
					\$279,600
Recruitment, selection and background investigations					
					\$120,000
Transition Costs					
					\$50,000
				Total	\$1,847,600

### Start-Up Budget Assumptions

- The fleet size is projected at 34 vehicles. Each officer would have a personally assigned fully equipped take-home vehicle. The chief and the detective would have unmarked cars. Eight reconditioned patrol cars would be purchased to offset the total purchase cost. Four would be pool cars for use when a vehicle needs repair or maintenance. The other four reconditioned vehicles would be issued to the least senior officers but would be slated for the first round of replacements.
- Uniforms and equipment include all uniforms, leather gear, weapons, and other equipment such as ballistic vests. Costs are not included for body-worn cameras.
- Additional equipment includes radar.
- Information technology includes laptops for each officer.

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- The “Contingency” category covers unanticipated costs. For example, some facility remodeling may be necessary.
  - Substantial funds are budgeted for hiring. Such components as thorough background checks, psychological testing, and medical examinations will be part of the hiring process.

## **Decision Point: Stay in a contractual relationship, or go it alone?**

There is no commonly accepted tipping point at which a jurisdiction decides to leave a contractual arrangement with another agency to create its own police department. Cost is certainly a critical element, but there are any number of factors that typically presage the decision to go it alone: problems with response times, quality of personnel, lack of visibility, style of policing, cost of contracted services, perceived lack of control over policing priorities, or lack of responsiveness to the jurisdiction’s leadership, among others. Our analysis did not uncover any critical, overriding factors that would argue for Indian Trail to create its own police department at this time. Forming a stand-alone police department would not generate substantial cost savings, residents seem generally satisfied with the policing services they receive, and perceived concerns about the priorities and direction of policing in Indian Trail under the UCSO contract have been addressed through better communication and information sharing.

In addition, Indian Trail would not be “bucking the trend” by remaining in a contractual relationship with the Union County Sheriff’s Office. Examples of communities with longstanding contracts for police services from their local Sheriff’s Office abound.

- Moreno Valley CA, a city of approximately 180,000, contracts with the Riverside County Sheriff’s Office for a full-service police department composed of 151 sworn positions and 48.5 non-sworn positions, at an annual cost approximately \$39 million. Deputies wear the Sheriff’s uniform with patches distinctive to the city, and the patrol units bear the city logo. The city provides facilities within the city limits for the assigned personnel. The Moreno Valley Police Department is commanded by a Sheriff’s Captain who acts as the Chief of Police and a department head for the city.
- In Broward County, FL, the Sheriff’s Office provides contract services to the city of Pompano Beach, with a population of 104,000 (plus an additional 20,000 residents during the winter) and 22 square miles. The annual budget of approximately \$31.5 million

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provides for 295 positions including a district captain, three captains, six lieutenants, 22 sergeants, 201 deputies and other positions.

- The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department provides police services to Paramount City, CA, with 10.4 square miles and 55,000 people. The annual budget of \$10.9 million provides for the contract which funds 42 patrol deputies, a detective team, and a deputy District Attorney. Also, in that budget amount the city has 28 city public safety deputies including code enforcement deputies.

These and other communities have found that contracting with their local Sheriff's Office can provide high-quality police services for their residents at a reasonable cost to taxpayers.

In Indian Trail, the cost of a stand-alone department that would need 30 sworn positions to provide service to meet policing needs over the next three to five years would be \$2,691,455. This compares to a cost of \$2,401,680 for a comparable contract with the Union County Sheriff's Office, a cost savings of \$291,000.

## Conclusion

**Recommendation:** *The Town of Indian Trail should continue to contract for police service through the Union County Sheriff's Office, provided that Indian Trail continues to receive the same high-value service it has enjoyed in the past. This decision makes sense from the standpoint of both service and cost. Even if Indian Trail were to expand its contractual services, as recommended, the amounts paid to the UCSO would be less than the costs of establishing and maintaining a comparable stand-alone police department. A stand-alone police department configured to meet policing needs over the next three to five years would cost \$2,691,455. This compares to a cost of \$2,401,680 for a comparable contract with the UCSO.*

The town receives substantial benefits from its assigned deputies being part of a larger organization. Hiring, training, and liability are all responsibilities assumed by the UCSO. Response to calls for service, back-up units, and even routine patrol are all augmented by non-contract units at no cost to Indian Trail. In fact, these other units are the primary responders to 25% of the calls for service in Indian Trail. Indian Trail contract deputies average 351 hours per week on Indian Trail calls for service while an additional 78 hours per week are provided by non-contract units. And because many of these calls are traffic-related, the deputies assigned to Indian Trail can focus more on criminal behavior and quality-of-life matters.

Being part of the Union County Sheriff's Office, Indian Trail deputies also have ready access to specialized policing services such as SWAT, Search and Rescue, specialized investigators, and crime scene processing. Also, supervisory staffing is supported by supervisors from adjacent areas of the county, so the number of supervisor in the contract is kept to a minimum.

As issues have arisen, the Sheriff's Office has been responsive. Regular updates on crime and policing priorities are now provided at Town Council meetings. Indian Trail cars now have the town's name on them, giving residents a sense of having law enforcement dedicated to their communities. Deputies are being trained as crash investigators to make Indian Trail residents less dependent on state troopers, thus improving response time when crash investigations are required. Deputies are now enforcing town ordinances and issuing civil citations, which was a priority for town leaders.

When contract deputy vacancies occur, they are filled in a reasonable period of time--and much more quickly than if the town had to recruit, hire, and train a new officer on its own.

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**While PERF recommends that Indian Trail remain in its current contractual relationship with the Union County Sheriff's Office, PERF also recommends that the town acquire additional deputies under the contract. Two more should be added in the next budget cycle, and then the town should consider an additional four deputies over the next three to five years. Longer range, as the town continues to grow and the full impact of the new road networks is felt, Indian Trail should consider additional deputies that would bring its force to 40 deputies by 2025.**