

PROBLEM ORIENTED POLICING

Elected officials made "Total Quality Service" in City Administration a priority. As part of this program, in June of 1995, the Police Department inaugurated "Problem-Oriented Policing" (POP) as a new way of doing business.

The West Palm Beach Police Department began the Community Oriented Policing Program(COP) in February 1991 in three areas, Old Northwood, Dunbar Village and Grandview Heights. The program quickly expanded as the residents realized the benefits of working with COP Officers as a team to solve problems. By the end 1994 the program was in 17 areas with 20 COP officers.

Traditional policing was "reactive," it responded to incidents and calls for help. By moving to "pro-active" policing, police now intervene to try to eliminate the source of the problem before a crime is committed. Problem Oriented Policing represents a significant evolution to help law enforcement "work smarter, not harder." Rather than responding to each call for help or service as separate individual incidents to be processed by traditional methods, POP involves the analysis of groups of incidents. Solutions are developed drawing upon a universe of public and private skills. POP integrates past research that has converged on two themes: increased operational effectiveness and closer community involvement.

POP is an evolving idea which invites citizen participation. POP is as much a philosophy as a set of techniques and procedures.