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The City of Lafayette and Lafayette Police Department discuss updates to ongoing community safety initiatives, present new body camera program.

LAFAYETTE, IN - May 18, 2016 - In an ongoing effort to keep the public informed, today the City of Lafayette and the Lafayette Police Department held a press conference to provide updates on community safety and crime prevention initiatives. We are committed to a wholistic approach to fighting crime in our community. Multiple organizations continue to come together in multiple ways to provide the solutions and support necessary to keep our residents safe and secure.

The most significant addition that has been made in the last month is the deployment of the new, highly-customized and intuitive body camera system. Every Lafayette police officer is now equipped with an Axon Body 2 on-officer video platform that has the power to take local policing to the next level and offer enhanced transparency. Each camera provides instant footage and GPS tracking that is uploaded into an evidence management system, allowing officers to get the information and administrative support needed to do their job more efficiently and accurately. As a result of the highly intelligent system, we are also in the process of providing each officer with a new iPhone that will pair with the body camera, ensuring the officer is always connected and easily able to access information at all times.

Lafayette Mayor Tony Roswarski is confident the body camera program will be a great benefit for local law enforcement. "This body camera program has the ability to forever change the way we fight crime. Never before have we been able to provide officers with such a sophisticated level of technology. I am proud to say that our city is leading the way with this effort and in doing so, always dedicated to making sure the men and women who protect our community are equipped with tools they need to prevent crime and keep people safe."

Lafayette Police Chief Patrick Flannelly continues to be impressed by the technology behind the body camera system. "We really took our time deciding on the right fit of body cameras for our department. The Axon Body Cam system developed by TASER is the perfect combination of smart technology and easy application. The online support and database management is expansive and able to keep our officers connected on multiple levels. Technology like the Freedom App, available through a smart phone device, extend the capabilities of our in car computers to a mobile environment, giving officers the flexibility and confidence that comes with having everything they need at their fingertips."

Other community safety and crime prevention initiative updates include:

- Full deployment of the expanded take home car program has been completed. A significant increase of vehicles are now in neighborhoods throughout Lafayette. The take home program ensures officer visibility, saves the department money on vehicle maintenance and provides an incentive that encourages new officers to live within the city limits.
- In April two new officers were sworn-in to the police department and we continue to seek excellent candidates to fill available openings. Several community safety focused positions have also been added. In the police department, the street crimes dedicated dispatcher position has been hired and upon completion of the training program the opening will be filled. A security officer has been assigned to the downtown area to help provide additional coverage for our growing urban core. New inspector positions are in the process of being filled to provide additional support and processing capabilities for housing violations and property assessments.
- In addition to expanding the downtown parking program, retired LPD officer Cecil Johnson has transitioned into an ordinance enforcement position within the engineering department. This allows multiple departments to further process violations and work directly with the police department to take care of ordinance related violations in neighborhoods.
- The multifaceted approach to dealing with abandoned houses and unsafe structures continues to make great progress. Through approval by the Lafayette Hearing Authority, five abandoned properties have successfully completed the process associated with the abandoned property tax sale that started back in September of 2015. Tax sales will go into effect this August. The removal of these unsafe structures will have a positive impact on the neighborhoods and provide investment potential for new properties that will help to revitalize the area.
- Renovations and revitalization of the Claystone At The Crossing apartment complex is progressing nicely. The Integra Property Group has made considerable headway with cosmetic improvements as well as tenants regulations, tolerance and management. Resident quality of life enhancements like educational programming and community-focused spaces are also being planned.

The Lafayette Police Department continues its commitment to community-driven policing. Awareness and outreach are at an all time high connecting us with valuable tips and citizen support. Monthly LPD training sessions reach hundreds of participants and so far this year officers have had the opportunity to visit with more than 40 neighborhood groups and local organizations. In 2016 alone 1,115 citizens have joined NextDoor.com, an online social network for local neighborhoods. Our community is engaged and becoming an essential piece of our crime prevention initiatives. Once again we ask everyone to remain proactive, continued to get involved and help send that important message that crime will not be tolerated.

A video of today's press conference will be available on the City of Lafayette's You-Tube page. More information about community safety initiatives, crime reporting, Lafayette Housing Authority initiatives and other stories from our Lafayette Police Department programs can be found at www.lafayette.in.gov



#SafeNeighborhoods #TeamLPD