Venice Police Department Staffing Study

Venice, FL

June 1, 2026

JONES SOLUTION GROUP

About Jones Solution Group

At ***Jones Solution Group (JSG)***, we specialize in providing innovative, evidence-based analysis and solutions tailored to the unique challenges of modern organizations. While we are widely recognized for our expertise in public safety and law enforcement, our consultants also partner with corporate, retail, and government organizations to navigate the difficulties associated with today's evolving professional landscape.

Led by **Dr. Marshall Jones**, a renowned expert in leadership and organizational development, JSG seeks to bridge the gap between academic research and real-world applications. Our approach ensures that organizational goals are met with practical insights that respect the realities of the people doing the work.

Our Core Specializations

We offer a comprehensive suite of services designed to strengthen every level of the organizational "pipeline":

- **Agency and Workforce Assessments:** Our team is well versed in qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods research with analytical approaches to identify organizational challenges, evaluate operational effectiveness, and develop data-driven solutions and strategic frameworks for continuous improvement.
- **Leadership Pipeline & Succession Planning:** In partnership with the ***Police Leadership Institute (PLI)***, we utilize the Law Enforcement Leadership Pipeline (LELP) framework. We help agencies move beyond "accidental leadership" by fostering growth at every level, from recruitment to senior command.
- **Recruiting & Retention:** We solve the workforce crisis through our "Solution Circle" framework, focusing on how agency culture and sergeant-level leadership drive employee stewardship and long-term retention.
- **Promotional Processes:** We develop custom, psychometrically sound promotional exams. Our processes are fair, transparent, and defensible, ensuring your organization identifies the right talent through scenario-based assessments and objective data.
- **Performance Management:** We transform "*check-the-box*" appraisals into powerful tools for growth using Behaviorally Anchored Rating Scales (BARS) and data-driven feedback systems.
- **Psychometric Services & Job Task Analysis (JTA):** We use scientific rigor to measure intelligence, personality, and competency, ensuring workforce planning is backed by advanced statistical techniques and behavioral data.

- **Addressing Dysfunctional Teams:** Using frameworks like the *Five Dysfunctions of a Team*, we diagnose broken trust and communication gaps to restore harmony and performance to struggling units.

About this Document

This document is the consolidated report of the Venice Police Department Staffing and Organizational Efficiency Study, prepared by Jones Solution Group, LLC. It brings together the qualitative assessment and the quantitative analysis intended to support the City Council, the City Manager, and Department leadership in staffing, structure, and budget decisions. It supersedes the individual constituent analyses produced during the engagement, each of which is preserved in full as a chapter within this report. Note: readers who wish to trace any conclusion to its evidence can move from a recommendation to the analysis that supports it and from there to the underlying data.

Basis, limitations, and reliance. The findings and recommendations in this document reflect the best professional understanding of the assessment team based on the information available during the engagement. That information includes the records provided by the Department and the City, the figures supplied by comparable agencies, and the statements made by personnel and stakeholders during structured interviews and focus groups. The analysis was performed with care and verified against source records wherever possible, and where computed values diverged from a prior figure, the divergence was disclosed rather than reconciled by adjustment.

Even so, no study of an operating organization captures every variable. Policing demand is shaped by factors that are seasonal, behavioral, and external, and that change over time, and the data systems that record it carry their own gaps, coding conventions, and limits, several of which are noted in the relevant chapters. The quantitative analysis rests on the accuracy and completeness of the records provided, and the qualitative analysis rests on the candor and recollection of those interviewed. The projections in this report are planning estimates built on stated assumptions, and actual outcomes will vary as conditions, policy, and resources change. The document should therefore be read as an informed and defensible basis for decision rather than as a complete or final account of every factor bearing on the Department's operations.

Recommendations that involve staffing levels, compensation, or budget are offered for the consideration of City leadership and are subject to the normal budget and policy process. Nothing in this document commits the City to any particular expenditure or action, and decisions on the matters it addresses rest with the appropriate City and Department authorities. This document does not constitute legal advice, and any matter carrying legal, or labor-relations implications should be reviewed by qualified legal counsel before action is taken.

Confidentiality and rights. This report was prepared for the internal use of the City of Venice and the Venice Police Department. It may contain sensitive operational, personnel, and security information, and it should be handled accordingly and shared only as appropriate and as permitted by applicable public-records law. No individual is identified by name in the analytical chapters, where personnel are referenced by role or rank, consistent with the confidentiality assured to participants during the assessment. The methods, frameworks, and analytical approaches

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Executive Summary

Venice is a coastal city on the Gulf of America in Sarasota County, Florida, occupying roughly 17 square miles of land including the island and a growing mainland. Its permanent population is about 30,000 residents, but that figure understates the population the Department serves. Venice is a destination, and its functional population swells through the late-fall-through-spring season to a peak near forty thousand, with a daytime and visitor presence that elected officials sized at several non-residents for every resident at the height of the season. The city is also growing in a structural sense rather than only a seasonal one, with planning agreements that carry the resident population toward forty-five thousand and a contemplated annexation that could push it higher, concentrated in the eastern and north-eastern areas that are developing fastest.

The community Venice serves skews older and more affluent than a population count alone would suggest, a profile typical of the Gulf coast retirement and seasonal-resident market, and it shapes the demand the Department sees. The investigative caseload reflects it directly, with a victim base in which more than four in ten are aged sixty-five or older and a steady shift toward fraud, cryptocurrency, and elder financial exploitation. The development trajectory layers new demand on top of that, bringing apartment density, large retail and medical projects, and a regional draw that generates retail theft, traffic, and crash load alongside the quality-of-life service the community expects.

The Venice Police Department is a small full-service municipal agency authorized at fifty-five sworn positions and twenty-two civilian positions. As of the Department's self-report in late May 2026, fifty-three sworn officers and twenty civilian personnel were on board. Sworn vacancy counts fluctuated over the course of the study period as separations and new hires moved through the pipeline, and individual figures cited elsewhere in this report reflect the date on which each was collected. Its defining characteristic is culture. Across every level of the organization, personnel described a strong family and camaraderie identity, pride in excellent equipment and generous training funding, and a commitment to a full-service, excellence-in-service standard set well above what the staffing would suggest. The community returns that commitment with high public trust evidenced by equipment funding and past referendum support, and elected officials who rate the Department’s reputation as excellent. Residents hold a white-glove expectation, wanting an officer who helps them through the aftermath of an incident rather than simply taking a report. This identity is the Department’s greatest asset, and as the study makes clear, it is also the source of the strain because the agency sustains that standard largely through the personal effort of its people.

Purpose of the study. The City of Venice and the Department commissioned this study to answer a question that staffing tables alone cannot, which is whether the Department is sized, structured, and resourced for what the city Venice has become and is becoming, and if not, what to do about

it. The question matters now because three pressures are converging. The resident and seasonal populations are rising against a sworn complement that has stayed essentially flat. The nature of the work is changing, with investigations moving toward complex financial and digital crime and patrol absorbing the consequences of a closed county jail and a heavier event load. And the Department is carrying both through a command and supervisory structure built for a smaller, simpler agency.

The study was designed to give the City Council and the City Manager a defensible evidence base for staffing and budget decisions, to test the perceptions of personnel against measured workload rather than accept or dismiss them, and to separate the changes the Department can make on its own at little or no cost from the capacity questions that require the budget process. A guiding principle ran through the work, which is to establish efficiency before sufficiency, demonstrating that existing resources are well used before any case for growth is made, so that the staffing conclusions rest on method rather than advocacy.

What the study did. The study relied on a qualitative assessment built from structured interviews and focus groups across the full range of stakeholders, namely sworn command, patrol supervisors and line officers, civilian staff, partner agencies in fire and emergency services and at a partner hospital, community representatives, and elected officials. In addition, the study undertook a quantitative analysis built on the Department's records (e.g., CAD, RMS, administration logs). Note: The patrol staffing was assessed with the *Wilson and Weiss workload-based model*, the federally published standard that sizes a force from measured demand and a locally derived staff relief factor rather than from population ratios. Spatial demand and disorder concentration were mapped with hex-grid density analysis and DBSCAN clustering, a method that identifies operational hotspots at the scale at which patrol deploys. Traffic safety was examined through a geographic comparison of crash and enforcement patterns. The Department was also benchmarked against eight comparable Florida coastal agencies on primary-source figures collected directly from their command staff. Finally, the workload was projected forward against the city's documented growth, with a forecast of how much demand could be reduced through low-cost engagement before any hiring decision could be made.

High-Level Recommendations. The following summarizes the study's recommendations and a suggested sequence for putting them in place. The purpose of this, is to present the City of Venice with a ten-year timeline showing when each recommendation is expected to begin and how long it runs. They are an at-a-glance reference only and should be determined in consultation with the city and VPD. The full reasoning, evidence, and supporting actions for each recommendation appear in the Recommendations section and the chapters it points to, and the recommendations are intended to be read as one interconnected system rather than a menu. This is broken down further in the narrative following Table A.

Table A.

Proposed Recommendations

Recommendation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Part One. Structural & process changes										
1. Deputy Chief	■									
2. Professional Standards function	■									
3. Corporal supervisory tier	■									
4. A-side / B-side patrol	■									
5. Move special operations	■									
6. Recruiting & retention	■	■	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪
7. Fix systems & hiring	■	■								
8. Evaluate technology position	■	■								
Part Two. Capacity questions										
9. Increase sworn patrol strength		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
10. Resolve investigations staffing		■	■	■						
11. Expand civilian capacity			■	■	■	■	▪	▪	▪	▪
12. Seasonal & growth planning			■	■	■	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪
13. Stabilize outreach & co-response			■	■						
14. Canine program decision			■	■						

Key: ■ active implementation ▪ ongoing / monitoring

Overall Total Patrol Summary

The Venice Police Department is currently authorized for 24 patrol positions, split evenly as 12 per side across the two rotating shift groups (A and B). Notably, these shifts often operate on a minimum staffing model (i.e., 3+1), and not on a full patrol capacity (i.e., 6+1). JSG sought to answer whether this was enough, and how should it be arranged?

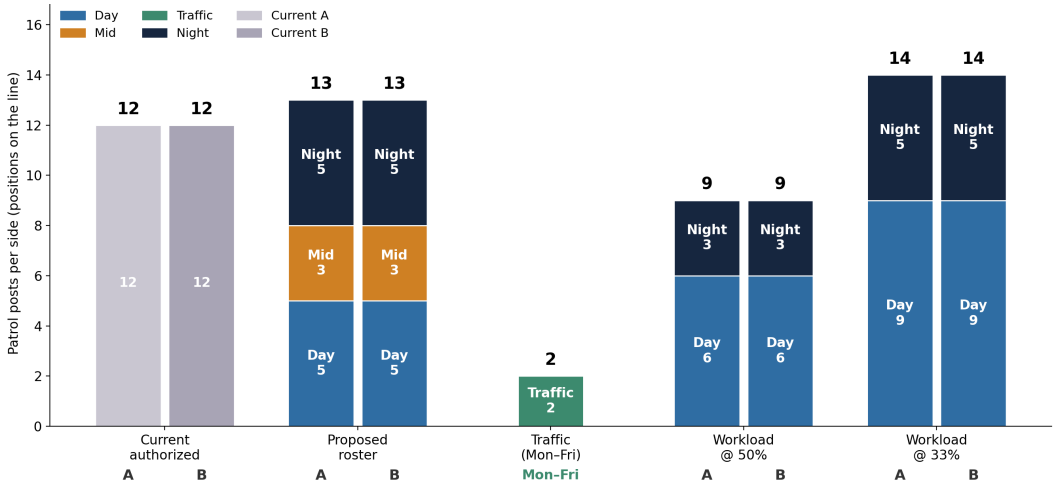
To answer it, JSG benchmarked the proposed roster against demand calculated from the city's data using the Wilson & Weiss workload model, the field standard for police staffing. That model produced two reference points. The 50% objective represents a balanced posture, where officers spend half their shift tied up on dispatched calls with approximately half their time left for anything else; as shown below, that calls for 9 *active* patrol positions per side. The 33% objective represents

a community-policing posture, protecting two-thirds of each shift for proactive work and visible presence; that calls for 13 *active* patrol officers per side, excluding supervisors.

The proposed roster of 15 per side sits just above the community-policing benchmark. As presented, and discussed later in this report, each side runs a Day shift, a Mid shift covering the afternoon-evening peak, a Traffic component, and a Night shift, with the two sides mirroring each other so coverage is continuous and equitable. The Mid and Traffic functions are the part of the proposal, i.e., they are what convert the roster from reactive to proactive.

Figure A.

VPD Patrol Staffing by Side (A/B)



Note, proposed and workload models include supervisors.

What this suggests is that current authorized patrol strength sits far below the proposed threshold. To meet rising calls-for-service across the city alongside the day-to-day demands that pull officers off the road, arrests, jail transports, court appearances, and training, the analysis indicates VPD should increase sworn patrol from 24 to a minimum of 40 officers, excluding supervisors, based on a 50% balanced workload objective. JSG recommends a higher roster still, consistent with the community-oriented model Venice operates, which reserves a greater share of each shift for proactive work than a minimum-response posture allows. In short, at current authorized strength and operating to a minimum-staffing model, VPD is one critical incident away from being overburdened, a single major event can absorb the entire on-duty complement, leaving no officers available for routine or emergency calls.

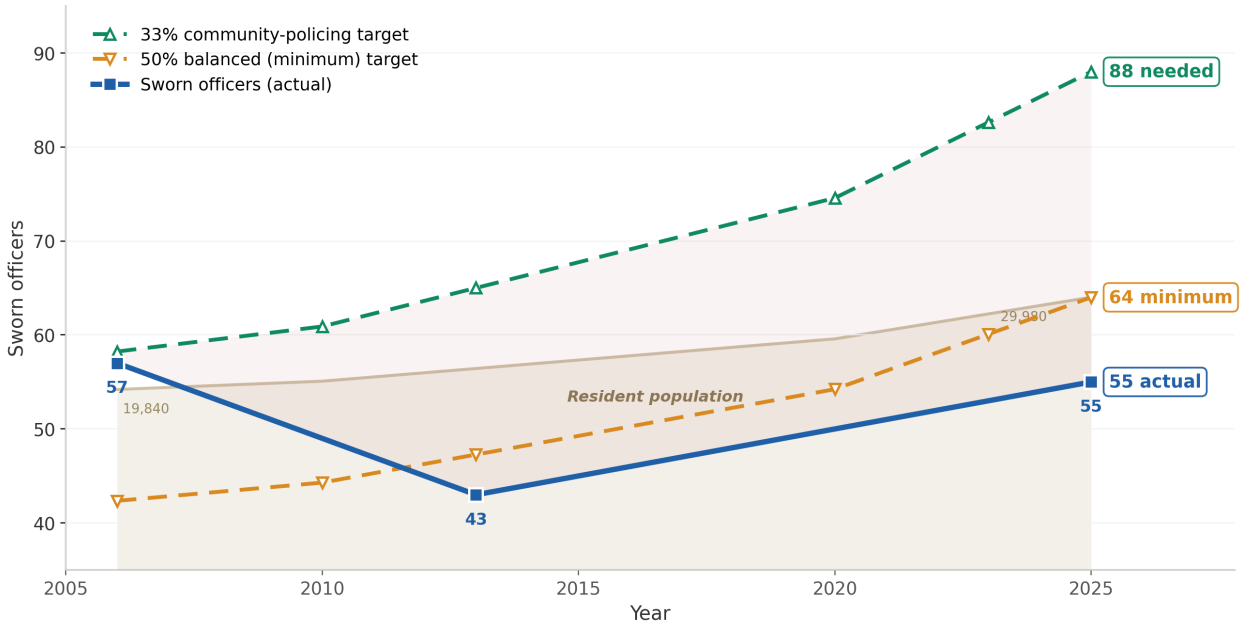
It should be noted that this model reflects the proposed 2025/26 establishment (i.e., it is not a fixed endpoint). As sworn strength increases through the phased hiring plan, the proposed roster scales with it, the per-side shift structure growing from the initial 5-3-2-5 model (Day-Mid-Traffic-Night) toward a 6-4-2-6 configuration and beyond as staffing allows. Notably, each increment raises the

guaranteed minimum on duty per shift and progressively converts proactive and traffic posts from positions that flex out under absence into a reliably staffed floor. The roster presented here is therefore the starting structure of a growth trajectory.

Note, for further clarification, the following figure shows population growth since 2006 compared against the growth of the total sworn officers in VPD. Venice's resident population has grown by roughly 51 percent over the period, while the sworn force is smaller today than it was in 2006, having fallen to a low of 43 officers in 2013 before a partial recovery to 55. Expressed as coverage, this represents a compound erosion of approximately 2.3 percent per year in officers per 1,000 residents, accumulating to a 36 percent decline against the 2006 staffing level. Put differently, simply holding the coverage Venice maintained in 2006 would require around 86 sworn officers today, against the 55 currently authorized.

Figure B.

Population growth against Projected Sworn Officers (2006 – 2025), including a 33% and 50% operating model



Patrol Hiring (2025 to 2035)

The required levels for patrol cannot move from its current authorized strength to its 2035 target in a single step, nor should it. The proposed recommendation runs in two stages: an initial catch-up to the proposed 2025/26 establishment, followed by sustained growth tracking the city's expansion through the decade.

The immediate priority is closing the gap between the 24 currently authorized patrol positions and the 40 the analysis identifies as the minimum, an increase of 16 sworn patrol officers, excluding supervisors. As set out above, and discussed within the body of this report, the figure of 40 is not drawn from any single calculation but converges from four independent directions: (i) the workload model at the 50% objective, (ii) the operational demands of the A/B deployment structure, (iii) the per-capita benchmark against peer agencies, and (iv) the on-duty parity comparison in which Venice currently stands alone as the outlier. It should be said, that when four methods agree, this is no longer a matter of assumption. The Department is simply below it, and the first task is to climb back to a level its own data established some time ago.

It bears repeating that 40 is a floor and not the final total. In other words, it is the establishment required to operate at a minimum-response posture, the point at which the Department can answer its calls without being one critical incident away from having no one left to send. It is also not the level at which Venice can deliver the community-oriented model it has adopted, which reserves a far greater share of each shift for proactive and preventive work. Reaching 40 stops the Department being overburdened; it does not yet allow it to police the city the way the city has said it wants.

The second stage addresses continue to address city growth. From the corrected base of 40, patrol should continue to expand toward approximately 60 sworn officers by 2035, paced to the city's projected expansion rather than delivered at once. The purpose here is not to reach a higher service objective but to keep pace with a growing community, so that the ground gained in the first stage is not lost as population and demand climb. Venice's resident population is projected to rise from roughly 32,000 today toward 45,000 by the mid-2030s, an increase of around 40 percent before the seasonal and visitor load that falls disproportionately on a coastal city is counted. A patrol establishment that stood still at 40 through that growth would, in real terms, be shrinking; the ratio of officers to residents would fall year on year, and the deficit corrected in stage one would slowly reopen, as VPD have seen since 2006. Growing patrol to roughly 60 over the same window holds coverage steady against a rising population and converts the proactive and traffic functions from posts that flex out under absence into a reliably staffed presence on every shift. Note, growing patrol to 60 over this window raises patrol coverage from approximately 0.75 to 1.33 patrol officers per 1,000 residents.

What the two stages described above do not yet reach is the 33% objective itself, the service level the city has historically adopted. Both the catch-up to 40 and the growth to 60 are calibrated to the 50% balanced posture. Neither closes the distance to the community-oriented standard. It is therefore worth setting out, plainly, what policing Venice to its stated 33% objective would require, so that the gap between what the city says it wants and what it currently funds is clear.

The same model at the 33% objective, which protects two-thirds of each shift for proactive and preventive work rather than half, calls for a minimum of 26 officers (13 officers per side) on patrol.

Per side, this comprises four patrol officers on days, three on the mid-shift, four on nights, and two traffic officers. Therefore, carried through on the same basis, the 33% community-policing posture implies a patrol establishment of roughly 60 officers at today's demand, not at 2035's[1]. In other words, the figure this report recommends the Department grow toward by the end of the decade is, under the community-policing standard the city has adopted, closer to what is required now.

Projected forward against the same population growth, the 33% establishment rises further still. Holding the community-policing service level steady as Venice expands toward 45,000 residents would imply a patrol force approaching 90 officers by 2035, lifting patrol coverage to around 2.0 patrol officers per 1,000 residents, more than a doubling of today's 0.75 and the first time the Department's patrol strength would track the scale of the community it serves. This is not a recommendation that the city fund 90 patrol officers inside the decade; the phased plan deliberately targets the achievable 50% floor and its maintenance. It is, rather, a statement of the true scale of the community-policing ambition, so that each future budget cycle can be measured against it honestly. Ultimately, the city must discuss and decide what it wishes to achieve within its budgetary cycles and must continue to monitor staffing across the decade.

Investigator Hiring (2025 to 2035)

Currently, the Department maintains eight detective positions plus one civilian; however, in practice two sit vacant, leaving six sworn investigators, plus one investigative aid carrying the workload of nine. Against a caseload that has nearly doubled over the review period, from 108 to 206 cases, those seven officers each carry roughly 29 active cases, against the *Police Executive Research Forum* benchmark of 12 to 15. The investigative unit is, by this measure, operating at close to twice its recommended caseload.

JSG therefore recommends a phased correction in three steps. First, the two existing vacancies should be filled within the next budget cycle. Second, one new investigator should be added by 2027, and a further one by 2029, taking the authorized detective establishment from nine to eleven over the period. Each addition continues to draw the caseload down: ten investigators reduce the load to roughly 21 cases each, and eleven to roughly 19.

It should be noted, however, that even at the conclusion of this plan the investigative unit will not have reached the *Police Executive Research Forum* benchmark. The target of eleven investigators is set against a representative rather than a peak caseload. Case openings have ranged from 108 in 2021 to a high of 221 in 2023, with a five-year mean of roughly 186 and the most recent year, 2025, at 185. Sizing the unit to this typical load rather than to its single busiest year, eleven investigators carry close to seventeen cases each, still above the recommended ceiling of fifteen

[1] This figure was determined based on a shift relief factor of 2.51 – this is discussed later in the report.

but materially closer to it than the current position. Reaching the benchmark on the peak caseload of 206 to 221 would require fourteen investigators or more. The recommendation set out here is therefore deliberately conservative: it is paced to what is affordable and absorbable rather than to what the benchmark alone would dictate at peak demand.

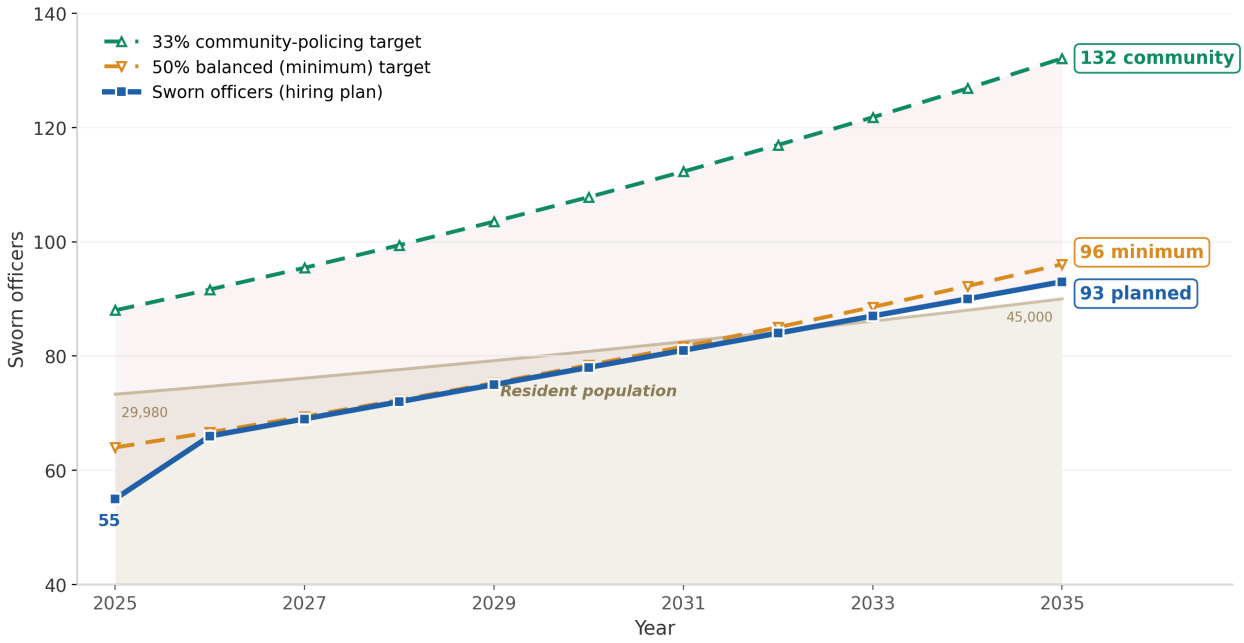
In addition, this caseload figure should not be treated as static. As technology-enabled offenses, online fraud, cryptocurrency theft, romance, and investment scams, and digitally facilitated exploitation, continue to rise, the complexity of the average case is likely to increase rather than its raw count alone. Cases of this kind demand more digital evidence handling, more inter-agency and financial-institution coordination, and longer investigative timelines, all of which lengthen time to disposition and raise the effective workload carried by each investigator, independent of how many new cases are opened. The same pattern is already visible in the Department's elder-victim caseload, where median time to disposition reached 154 days in 2024. The investigative establishment should therefore be reviewed against actual caseload and disposition data on a recurring basis, and hiring adjusted accordingly, so that the unit is sized to the genuine investigative burden as it evolves rather than to a case count that may understate the work each case now requires.

Total Sworn Hiring (2025 – 2035)

The phased hiring plan scales with the population it serves, and therefore the benchmark the Department is trying to reach rises every year as Venice grows. In summary, the hiring plan calls for an immediate intake of officers followed by an increase of approximately six per year, which lifts sworn strength from 55 today to 93 by 2035, after allowing for the roughly three departures annually. Based on the City's planning projection, the resident population grows from approximately 30,000 today to 45,000 by 2035, a compound rate of roughly 4.1 percent per year. Scaling the staffing requirement to that growth, the 50 percent balanced objective, the minimum-response posture below which the Department cannot reasonably be expected to function, rises from 64 officers today to around 96 by 2035. The 33 percent community-policing objective the City has historically adopted rises further still to approximately 132. Figure C details this below.

Figure C

Projected Growth of Sworn Officers and Population Growth (2025 – 2035)



Summary of the Primary Findings

The findings below were drawn from the qualitative assessment and the quantitative analysis together, and each was undertaken against the Department's own records. A full account for each finding can be found under the '*Methodology and Results*' section of this report.

1. **Sworn patrol strength is below adequate on every measure applied.** The workload-based Wilson and Weiss analysis, on 2024 numbers, finds the Department needs between 17 patrol officers on duty (cumulatively, across A and B side), at the balanced 50 percent objective, and 26 (i.e., 13 officers each, on side A and B) at the community-policing objective. Because no officer is available every day once days off, leave, and training are counted, sustaining that on-duty presence requires a roster of about 43 at the balanced objective and about 65 at the community-policing objective once the relief factor of 2.51 is applied. Against that, the 24 currently authorized for 2025 and 2026 falls below the roster required at every objective, which is why the authorized strength translates to only about nine or ten officers on the road across all shifts at any given time. Forecasting forward against the city's documented growth, the on-duty requirement rises year on year, from about 28 patrol officers at the community-policing objective today to about 29 by 2027, 30 by 2030, and 33 by 2035, with the roster needed to sustain it rising from about 70 today toward about 83 by 2035. The peer comparison points the same way, placing Venice second lowest of nine comparable Florida coastal agencies at 1.65 sworn officers per

thousand residents against a peer median of 2.79, where reaching that median would require roughly 84 sworn officers by 2035, a figure that converges independently with the previous Chief's ten-year target of 82. The Department sits below its own workload range before any growth or seasonal load is fully counted. This is developed in Chapter One.

2. ***Authorized strength (6 per shift) is functionally the minimum, and the current minimum (3 officers per shift) results in multiple challenges to deliver quality policing.*** Personnel at every sworn level described authorized strength functioning as a floor rather than a cushion, with the loss of one or two officers felt immediately and proactive work displaced by a permanent reactive posture. Where preliminary indicators suggested available time on paper, the reconciliation showed that encumbered time, unpredictable demand, the multi-hour cost of a single arrest since the nearby jail closed, and collateral duties that never appear in calls-for-service counts explain how genuine available time coexists with a genuine sense of being stretched.
3. ***The command and supervisory structure lack accountable roles above and below the squad.*** The patrol division commander carries a span of control near 42 direct and indirect reports and has informally absorbed an executive second-in-command function, leaving no time to mentor the next generation of command, which is a succession risk as much as a workload concern. At the squad level, there is no designated supervisory backup beneath sergeant, so a sergeant's absence collapses a lieutenant into an acting-sergeant role, a gap sharpest on the youngest night shift. Internal affairs, accreditation, policy, and training have no single accountable owner.
4. ***Personnel carry too many responsibilities (hats), and the most technical work sits in no job description.*** Supervisors and specialists were described carrying collateral duties well beyond their titled roles, from digital forensics and internal affairs to fleet, recruiting, and the drone program, as the cost of being a small full-service agency that meets a high service expectation. The recurring concern was that highly technical work, particularly digital forensics and fraud investigation (e.g., grand larceny), sits in no formal position description, which makes it invisible when positions are justified and fragile when the person carrying it leaves.
5. ***The investigative caseload is heavier than a raw case count suggests, and the unit cannot retain detectives.*** The investigative caseload is heavier than a raw case count suggests. A raw annual count of roughly 230 cases across about seven detectives appears low, but active caseloads run 30 to 45 per detective against a healthy level of 10 to 15. Two forces compound the load. The case mix has shifted toward fraud, cryptocurrency, and elder financial exploitation, which is far more labor intensive than traditional property crime, and the rapid growth of electronic evidence has increased the work required per case across virtually all crime types, a demand amplified by community expectations that such evidence will be reviewed. Tenure in the unit reflects the strain. No detective has remained in the assignment beyond about five years, and while personnel leave investigative roles

for a variety of reasons, the sustained caseload is among them. The general-investigations file confirms 932 cases over five years with a victim base skewing elderly, 43 percent aged 65 or older.

6. ***Traffic enforcement is in the right places but at the wrong times, and one zone is a clear gap.*** Vehicle stops and crashes align almost perfectly in space, at a correlation near 0.91, which shows enforcement is well-targeted geographically, but they align poorly in time, at a correlation of 0.27, because crashes peak in the early afternoon while stops peak in the evening. Zone V07 on the east side carries the city's lowest enforcement intensity at 1.4 stops per crash against a city average of 4.4, its fastest call-volume growth, and its slowest emergency response.
7. ***A small number of locations generate a disproportionate share of demand, and some of it is cost-efficient actionable.*** Citizen calls came from about 10,300 distinct addresses, yet the ten busiest account for roughly a tenth of all citizen call volume. The single most disorder-intensive location, a motel on the US 41 Bypass, runs about 96 percent high-priority calls, and one school generated 577 false-alarm calls over five years almost entirely from a fixable system fault. Acting on the top repeat locations and the alarm outliers could remove on the order of a thousand dispatches and 1,400 officer-hours a year at little cost, weighted to the afternoon where the burden concentrates.
8. ***The agency operates as two departments across the year, and growth is widening the load.*** Personnel and city departments described a pronounced late-fall-through-spring peak, 'the season', driven more by events, traffic, and quality-of-life demand than by the medical-call volume emergency services measures, with a day-use population reaching several non-residents for every resident at peak. Apartment density, eastern and northeastern expansion, major retail and medical development, and a regional draw are changing the volume, geography, and call type of demand, and the city is projected to grow from roughly thirty thousand residents toward forty-five thousand and potentially higher, against a flat sworn complement.
9. ***Venice competes well on pay and retention but is constrained by authorized size.*** The Department carries a relatively low sworn vacancy rate yet fields only about 1.65 sworn officers per thousand residents, second lowest among the nine comparison agencies, because the authorized count itself is small for the workload and service expectations Venice carries. In the local labor market where Venice actually competes, its $70,000 starting pay sits narrowly above the Sarasota Police Department ($68,111) and North Port ($68,396) and about $5,500 below the Sarasota County Sheriff's Office ($75,457). That snapshot, however, is inherently unstable. Regional agencies revisit their pay scales on roughly two-year cycles and position them against local competitors, so today's margin is temporary by design. Differences in employer-paid health insurance, retirement contributions, and other benefits further complicate any base-pay comparison, and the advertised figures are entry rates only, while the lateral market that determines whether

Venice keeps its experienced five-to-eight-year officers is priced on experience by every agency in the region. The practical conclusion is that pay position is a comparison the Department must monitor continuously rather than a problem it has solved, and recruiting and retention currently have no accountable owner to perform that monitoring. The durable lever available to the City is the one not subject to a competitor's next pay adjustment, which is the number of positions it authorizes.

10. ***Process, technology, and key-person risks create agency and public safety threats requiring remedy.*** An archaic payroll process separate from scheduling, a long list of disconnected software logins, and citywide policies that treat a 24-hour agency like every other department consume supervisor and officer time, while the inability to post a position before it is formally vacated drives coverage gaps. Essentially, based on internal conversations with VPD, all day-to-day essential department technology rests on one long-tenured person, with a designated alternate backup from the city able to cover only routine matters during normal work hours, a concentration the assessment framed as a major operational threat rather than a staffing preference. Notably, these are issues are likely to compound as technology becomes more prevalent in day-to-day policing functions. These are developed in the organizational-structure chapter and the systems findings.
11. ***Quality of service and community trust are genuine strengths, and they are the source of the strain.*** Community support is high, evidenced by equipment funding and past referendum support, and elected officials rated the Department's reputation as excellent, with residents holding a white-glove expectation of service. The assessment's strongest and most uncomfortable conclusion is that this quality of service is itself the source of the strain, since the Department absorbs the cost of meeting it through the effort of its people, and the choice before the City is whether to build the structure and capacity that sustain that service or to accept the attrition and burnout that will otherwise erode it.

Recommendations

As noted above, the Venice Police Department is a high-performing, community-trusted agency operating beyond the limits of its current structure and staffing. The qualitative assessment found broad, independently corroborated agreement on a single underlying condition, which is that the Department delivers a full-service, excellence-in-service standard with a workforce and a command structure sized for a smaller agency than Venice has become. Personnel at every level, partner agencies, and most members of the governing body described the same pattern in different words. They expressed a need to maximize staffing, because the Department currently operates at what should be the minimum, supervisors and specialists included. They described being responsible for too many tasks (informally considered wearing too many hats) and they identified a structure that, both above and below the squad level, lacks the accountable structures and roles a department this size requires.

The most important staffing finding in this report concerns sworn patrol strength. On every measure the study applied, workload, peer staffing, and coverage, Venice's authorized strength falls short of where a department serving this city should sit. The finding rests on two separate questions, and the key to reading them is to keep the numbers in the same currency. Some figures describe officers actually working the road, and some describe officers on the roster, meaning on the books. The roster is always the larger number, because only about forty percent of a roster is available on any given day once days off, leave, and training are removed, so each officer on the road must be backed by roughly two and a half on the roster. That conversion, the staff relief factor of 2.51, was derived from Venice's own records, and the two kinds of figures cannot be compared until both are expressed as roster.

1) The first is a question of workload, meaning how many patrol officers the call volume justifies. The Wilson and Weiss model answers it by setting a target for the share of an officer's time spent answering calls, with the remainder reserved for proactive work and for the surges that occur whenever demand runs above the average. Based on 2025 figures, a target of roughly half an officer's time on calls justifies about 17 officers on the road, and the one-third target appropriate for a proactive, community-oriented agency, which is the standard the traffic, repeat-location, and community-service findings all point toward, justifies about 26 on the road (i.e., 13 on either side – A and B). Converted to roster at the 2.51 relief factor, those figures require a sworn patrol roster of about 40 and about 65 respectively. The Department authorizes 24. The current roster therefore sits below even the balanced objective, and it works out to only about nine or ten officers actually on the road across all shifts at any given time, which is why the Department can answer its calls but cannot consistently sustain proactive capacity. The peer comparison reinforces this, placing Venice second lowest of nine comparable agencies at 1.65 sworn officers per thousand residents against a peer median of 2.79.
2) The second is a question of coverage, meaning the specific shift-by-shift design the Department should build toward rather than the average the workload implies. The JSG minimum-staffing model sets a defined coverage floor of four officers and a supervisor on the day shift, a four officer new mid-shift across the demand peak, four and a supervisor on the night shift, and a two-officer traffic detail, organized across the A-side and B-side patrol structure. That floor puts sixteen officers on the road at the afternoon peak, against roughly ten under the present pattern, and carrying it requires a sworn patrol roster of about 40 against the 24 authorized today. This coverage roster sits at the lower end of the workload-based roster range above, which is the deliberate intent, since it is a guaranteed minimum to build toward first rather than the maximum the workload could justify. Both numbers describe the roster, so they are directly comparable, and both place the requirement well above the 24 authorized today.

Overall, the recommendations that follow come directly from quantitative and qualitative assessment from this staff study. The first is a set of structural and process changes that can be made now, at no increase in sworn strength and with minimal cost, to relieve strain and restore accountability. The second is a set of capacity questions, inclusive of sworn, civilian, and specialty staffing, led by the sworn patrol increase noted above. The structural changes will prepare the ground for future staffing but cannot by themselves resolve the issues that the quantitative analysis and the normal budget process must address. Two principles run through all of them. The first is to sequence efficiency before sufficiency, demonstrating value at the line level before asking for growth, which positions the structural changes first without treating them as a substitute for the staffing the workload requires. The second is to treat the structural recommendations as one interconnected system rather than a menu since each depends on the others.

1) **Relieve command-tier strain by establishing a Deputy Chief.** The most consistently corroborated structural condition in the assessment. It is an unsustainable strain on the patrol division commander, described from three independent vantages, namely command looking down through the organization, the affected commander describing his own work week, and an executive-staff member observing daily workflow. The commander reported a span of control in the range of forty-two direct and indirect reports and has informally absorbed the duties of an executive second-in-command, which leaves no time for strategic oversight or for mentoring the lieutenants who are the Department's next generation of command, making this a succession risk as much as a workload problem. Establishing a Deputy Chief above the operational command tier, by converting an existing lieutenant position, absorbs that second-in-command function, restores unity of command, and creates a defined leadership ladder from lieutenant to captain to deputy chief. The change is sworn-count neutral. The quantitative analysis verifies the reported span against accepted benchmarks. In short, it recomputes the patrol span before and after this change and the special-operations move at Recommendation 5.
2) **Restore an accountable Professional Standards function reporting to the Chief.** Internal affairs, accreditation, policy, and training currently have no single accountable owner, the condition documented in theme A5. Internal-affairs cases rotate across patrol lieutenants who must investigate their own personnel, accreditation rests with an at-will contractor with no succession plan, and personnel performing high-liability investigations report not having had recurrent training in years. The Department has already lost accreditation once under this arrangement. Consolidating these functions, along with the orphaned background-investigation and recruiting-support functions, under a Professional Standards Lieutenant reporting directly to the Chief, restores the accountability lost when the administrative-lieutenant position was cut in the recession-era reductions, preserves investigative independence, and reduces liability. This is a reassignment of an existing lieutenant position, not an addition, and the quantitative analysis of internal-affairs caseload and the manhours patrol lieutenants now spend on it shows the consolidation

relocates work already being done rather than adding it, which reinforces the budget-neutral framing. Two supporting actions make the restoration durable.

a. Develop a succession plan for accreditation and policy. Capture the contracted retiree's accreditation and policy knowledge and transfer it to the Professional Standards Lieutenant before any departure, so the Department does not face a second loss of accreditation continuity, addressing the at-will-departure risk theme A5 names directly.
b. Restore recurrent internal-affairs training. Establish a recurring training requirement for all personnel authorized to conduct internal-affairs investigations, covering current investigative standards, due-process and Garrity requirements, evidence handling, and documentation on a defined cycle, with scheduling and tracking owned by the Professional Standards Lieutenant, which closes the recurrent-training gap theme A5 documents and which the recurrent-training records will confirm.

3) **Establish a supervisory tier between officer and sergeant (Corporal).** The assessment found no designated supervisory backup below sergeant; the gap described in theme A4. When a sergeant is absent, the lieutenant collapses into an acting-sergeant role, and a prior leaner structure failed for exactly this reason. The gap is sharpest on night shift, the youngest squad and the one most in need of on-scene supervision. A Corporal on each of the four squads, created by formalizing the existing Master Police Officer designations and converting existing officer positions, provides genuine backfill. It is an appointed, revocable, developmental assignment, in which the corporal carries a zone and a normal call load by default and steps into compensated acting supervision only to fill a real sergeant absence, triggered by being logged in as supervisor of record. Because the corporal is assigned a zone by default, the squad fields one more call-taker on the road than under the lieutenant-and-sergeant model, which positively impacts shift staffing. The quantitative analysis sizes supervisory coverage gaps by shift, the frequency with which a lieutenant or sergeant is the sole supervisor on duty, and how often the special-operations lieutenant is pulled in to cover patrol supervision, which is the gap the corporal layer is built to close. One supporting action develops the role deliberately.
    a. Build a supervisory and leadership development program on the corporal assignment. Create a structured progression from officer to corporal to sergeant to lieutenant, with supervisory training, structured mentorship from sergeants and lieutenants, and documented expectations for the acting-supervisor role, so the position is a genuine proving ground for the next generation of supervisors rather than an ad hoc backup.
4) **Reorganize patrol into a sustainable A-side and B-side lieutenant structure.** Building on the corporal layer, reorganize patrol from four lieutenants to an A-side and a B-side lieutenant, each overseeing two sergeants and two corporals across the day and night squads on that side, which is the configuration that drew support in theme A4. This

narrows the lieutenant span of control to a sustainable level and tightens the line between shift supervision and division command. The structure is durable only because the corporal layer beneath each sergeant supplies the backfill whose absence caused the earlier attempt to fail, which is precisely why Recommendations 3 and 4 must be adopted together rather than separately, and it is sized by the same supervisory-coverage analysis noted at Recommendation 3.

5) **Move special operations from patrol to support services.** Both captains and the command group endorsed moving special operations, namely traffic, marine, canine, and the community-outreach team, out from under patrol and over to support services, which themes A3 and A1 record as the most immediate structural relief available without adding a position. It evens the organizational chart, reduces the patrol commander's span directly, and pairs with the Deputy Chief as the two budget-neutral changes that rebalance the command tier. The relief is captured in the before-and-after span-of-control precomputation noted at Recommendation 1. The analysis also measures how often special-operations personnel are pulled to patrol, which this move and the corporal layer together should reduce. The move gives the outreach team a clearer home, which connects to the stabilization recommended in Part two.
6) **Give recruiting and retention an accountable owner.** Recruiting is a function nobody formally owns, the systemic constraint documented in theme A6. There is no dedicated recruiter, little marketing or social-media presence, and recent pay-for-experience gains are left undersold because no position is responsible for them. Because prior structural changes failed when the Department could not backfill the positions they depended on, an owned recruiting pipeline is a precondition for restructuring rather than an afterthought. The retention priority named most often was the loss of experienced five-to-eight-year officers to neighboring agencies, with the county drawing them away at a mid-seventy-thousands starting salary and a fuller menu of specialty assignments. The Professional Standards Lieutenant at Recommendation 2 provides the accountable home, and the quantitative analysis isolates the five-to-eight-year mid-career loss rate that the assessment identifies as decisive, the residency-against-radius distribution that sizes the vehicle review below, time-to-fill and background washout rates, and a formal compensation review against true coastal comparable, covering civilian as well as sworn positions with a resignation-cohort survey mapping each 2025 departure to its supervisory chain to test whether losses cluster under particular supervisors or distribute agency-wide. The work itself is defined by the following components.
    a. Adopt a recruiting plan as a precondition for the reorganization. Owned by the Professional Standards Lieutenant, the plan should set a defined backfill target tied to the specific positions the new structure depends on, actively market the pay-for-experience improvements and build a deliberate candidate pipeline, add a Realistic Job Preview tool to improve fit and reduce the early out-of-state churn the assessment describes, pursue a targeted Florida Retirement System lateral

strategy aimed at dual-certified detention personnel and officers who left for other FRS agencies, review the employee-referral system and its incentives, and carry a recruiting message built on the Department's documented strengths, which theme B5 establishes as the family and camaraderie culture, excellent equipment, generous training funding, and strong benefits.

b. Review and expand the take-home-vehicle radius. Weigh an expanded radius against fleet and cost effects, since the current twenty-mile limit was named in themes A6 and B5 as a concrete, fixable disadvantage for experienced candidates in neighboring counties, and the residency-against-radius data will size it directly.
c. Conduct stay interviews alongside exit interviews. Run stay interviews on a regular cycle, focused on the five-to-eight-year band, to capture what keeps officers and what is at risk of pushing them out while there is still time to act, giving the Department a leading indicator to pair with the lagging read from exit data and the resignation-cohort survey.
d. Form a collateral-duty recruiting team. Create a standing group of volunteer officers to represent the agency at job fairs and recruiting events, extending the owner's reach without adding a position and letting younger officers engage candidates who share their generational outlook.

7) **Fix the administrative systems and hiring rigidity that consume officer time.** Personnel across sworn and civilian functions described an archaic payroll process separate from scheduling and from the citywide finance system, a long list of disconnected software logins, and citywide policies that treat a 24/7 agency like every other department, all documented in theme A9. The disconnect generates a recurring burden at the start of each pay week and every time a sick call against minimum staffing forces a manual search for who is next to be ordered in, and the inability to post a position until it is formally vacated was named as a concrete driver of coverage gaps. A light quantitative sizing of the manhours spent on payroll reconciliation and cross-system entry, set alongside the collateral-duty manhours, gives the total non-operational load on supervisors in one currency. These are low-cost process fixes that return supervisor and officer time.
    a. Conduct a systems inventory and integration review. Catalog the disconnected systems, namely dispatch, records, the license-plate reader, patrol-request tools, body cameras, and collaboration software, identify where duplicate manual entry occurs, and prioritize integration, with the payroll-to-scheduling-to-finance disconnect as the first target and consolidation of proactive-patrol logging into a single system as a concrete first step.
    b. Review and potentially ease anticipatory-hiring rigidity. Work with the City to allow posting and recruitment ahead of a known separation, closing the lag between a departure and a backfill, which is the policy-side complement to the recruiting plan's backfill target at Recommendation 6.

8) **Address the single point of failure in communications and technology.** Essentially all day-to-day essential department technology, including dispatch, records, the license-plate network, and body cameras, rests on one long-tenured person, with a designated alternate backup from the city able to cover only routine matters during normal work hours , the concentration theme B2 frames as a major operational threat rather than a staffing preference, since an unplanned absence or departure would expose the Department across every system it runs on. The concentration is compounded by a roughly thirty-thousand-dollar pay gap[2] against similar positions in the county and by county-mandated platform changes that add to the same workload. Separate the communications function from the technology function and add a dedicated technology position, which both eliminates the key-person risk and supplies the capacity the rising technology load requires, including ownership of the systems-integration review at Recommendation 7. The quantitative analysis sizes the technology workload and system count carried by the single position and benchmarks the pay disparity against county comparables, which folds into the compensation review noted at Recommendation 6.
9) **Increase sworn patrol strength, which the analysis confirms is below adequate.** This is the central staffing finding of the study, and it should be stated plainly. The key to reading it correctly is to keep two measures in the same currency. The Wilson and Weiss model produces an *active-patrol* figure, meaning officers actually working the road, while authorized strength is a *roster* figure, meaning officers on the books. Roster is always the larger of the two, because only about forty percent of a roster is available on any given day once days off, leave, and training are removed, so each officer on the road must be backed by about two and a half on the roster. That conversion factor, the staff relief factor of 2.51, was derived from Venice's records, and the two measures cannot be compared until both are expressed as roster. On 2025 figures, the Wilson and Weiss model finds the workload needs about 17 officers *on the road* at a balanced objective, where roughly half an officer's time goes to calls, and about 26 on the road at the one-third objective appropriate for a proactive, community-oriented agency, which is the standard the traffic, repeat-location, and community-service findings all point toward. Converted to roster at the 2.51 factor, those active figures require a sworn patrol roster of about 40 and about 65 respectively. The Department authorizes 24. The current roster therefore sits below even the balanced objective, and it translates to only about nine or ten officers actually on the road across all shifts at any given time. The qualitative testimony in theme A1, in which personnel at every level described authorized strength functioning as a floor and a forced reactive posture, is the lived experience of that gap. The peer comparison points the same way, placing Venice second lowest of nine comparable Florida coastal agencies at 1.65 sworn officers per thousand residents against a peer mean of 2.35 and median of 2.79, where reaching the median would currently

[2] This was noted in conversation with VPD staff. The current study has not sought to confirm this, so caution is required when interpreting this statement.

require on the order of 84 sworn officers and converges with the previous Chief's ten-year target of 82; albeit Chief Thorpe suggested this figure be reached by 2035. JSG recommends that this figure represents the current required sworn capacity. The reconciliation that theme C2 frames as the analytical hinge of the study, namely that available time on paper coexists with a real sense of being stretched, is explained by encumbered time, unpredictable demand, the multi-hour cost of a single arrest since the county jail closed, and collateral duties that never appear in raw call counts, so the apparent slack is not surplus capacity. The recommendation is to size and fund an increase in sworn patrol strength toward that workload-based roster range and the peer and ten-year targets, and two supporting actions follow.

a. Adopt the JSG minimum-staffing model as the design basis for the increase. The model establishes a coverage floor of four officers and a supervisor on the day shift, four officers on a new mid-shift placed across the late-morning to evening demand peak, four officers and a supervisor on the night shift, and a dedicated two-officer traffic detail, organized across the A-side and B-side patrol structure. That floor puts sixteen officers on the road at the afternoon peak, against roughly ten under the present pattern. Applying the staff relief factor of 2.51 to that floor, the model requires a day shift sworn patrol roster of about 40 on 2025 figures. This roster sits at the lower end of the workload-based range above, which is the deliberate intent, since the model is a defined coverage floor rather than the maximum the workload could justify, and it can be grown toward the upper end as demand rises. By the ten-year horizon in 2035, with the resident population reaching roughly forty-five thousand, the workload requirement rises to about 26 officers on the road at the balanced objective and about 39 at the one-third objective, and the JSG coverage roster grows from about 40 now toward about 60 over the same period as its on-duty floor rises with demand. The model should be phased, beginning with the mid-shift and the traffic detail (including those already assigned to traffic), and using the capacity freed by the efficiency measures in Part one. Then, grown toward the full roster as the population trajectory lifts demand, on the understanding that deferring that growth steadily erodes the proactive capacity on which Venice's standard of policing and public safety depend.
b. Capture involuntary-transport time in CAD. Define consistent status codes that record the full out-of-service interval for arrest transports and for Baker Act and Marchman Act transports, which the closure of the nearby jail has made a multi-hour drain that current coding buries in general out-of-service status, the workload driver theme A15 documents, so the staff relief factor and the working-strength model rest on a true picture of how much patrol capacity transport consumes.

10) **Resolve investigations staffing on active caseload and complexity, not raw annual case count.** A raw annual count of roughly 230 cases across about seven detectives

suggests surplus capacity, but every other line of evidence points the other way, the divergence theme C1 records and the assessment directs the quantitative analysis to adjudicate. Active caseloads run 30 to 45 per detective against a healthy level of 10 to 15, fraud and cryptocurrency cases are far more labor-intensive than traditional property crime. Notably, detectives highlighted in their interviews that many had left due to the cognitive load associated to their work. As such, investigations staffing should be set only after the C1 reconciliation aligns the raw annual count with the point-in-time active caseload and the case-labor data and computes clearance and asset-recovery rates, and that reconciliation is an explicit prerequisite, so the second General Investigations position must not be fixed until it resolves. Three supporting actions address the changing nature of the work documented in theme A14.

a. Give in-house digital forensics a sustainable home. Replacing the lost forensics capability restores it but does not solve why it was lost, since the in-house model cannot match private-sector pay, so weigh durable options including a civilian forensics position, a regional or task-force shared arrangement, contracted capacity, or a retention-pay mechanism, so the capability survives turnover rather than collapsing each time a trained examiner departs.
b. Formalize the fraud and financial-crime function. The assessment names fraud alongside digital forensics as high-value technical work sitting in no job description, so define it as a position or assignment, scoped together with the civilian investigative support at Recommendation 11 so the sworn and civilian sides of that work are planned as one.
c. Explore a proactive elder financial-exploitation effort. Because this crime is underreported and the Department uncovers more once it actively looks, review the scale of the underreporting, the resource demands a proactive posture would create, and partnerships with banks, adult protective services, and the State Attorney before committing, recognizing that a proactive posture would generate more cases and so connects back to the C1 reconciliation.

11) **Expand civilian capacity to free sworn officers for sworn work.** Civilian roles were described as a force multiplier in theme A12, with community resource officers handling reports, crashes, code enforcement, and parking end to end, and an investigative aide who is a former detective multiplying fraud, cryptocurrency-tracing, background, and subpoena capacity. The advocated sequence was deliberate, examining process and technology before adding people, since people are the most expensive resource, and aiming for civilian coverage on every shift. The quantitative analysis computes the share of calls and tasks divertible to civilians and current civilian coverage by shift, and every task moved to a civilian, returns sworn capacity to the working-strength analysis at Recommendation 9. However, this theme was informed primarily from the qualitative data. Notably, there was insufficient quantitative data to identify exact civilian staffing needs. As such, the recommendations made are based on that caveat:

a. Conduct civilian staffing modeling. Size the community-resource-officer program by identifying the share of calls and tasks divertible from sworn officers to civilians, after first testing whether each task can be eliminated as process or absorbed by a system as technology, which ties this work to the systems review at Recommendation 7 and the job-task analysis that supports Recommendation 1.
b. Assess expanding civilian investigative support. Formalize the value of the investigative-aide role and evaluate a second such position, scoped together with the fraud and forensics work at Recommendation 10.
c. Explore a senior or citizen volunteer program. As the lowest-cost tier of the civilianization logic, assign trained volunteers to low-risk, non-enforcement tasks such as residence and vacation-watch checks and traffic-control support at events, screened for no enforcement authority or safety exposure.
d. Conditionally add part-time public-records support. Records is the one function reporting adequate staffing in theme B1, so measure the body-camera redaction and public-records load first, where an hour of video can take two to three hours to redact and add the part-time position only if the data shows existing staff cannot absorb it.

12) **Plan staffing around the seasonal and event load and the documented growth trajectory.** The agency effectively operates as two departments across the year, the condition documented in theme A7, with a late-fall-through-spring peak driven by events, traffic, and quality-of-life demand more than by medical-call volume, a distinction theme C3 directs the seasonal analysis to preserve. Growth compounds this, as theme A13 records that apartment density, eastern and northeastern expansion, major retail and medical development, and a regional draw are changing the volume, geography, and type of demand, with response times projected to rise against a flat sworn complement. Staffing should be modeled against functional, seasonal-peak population and the growth projection, not resident population alone. The quantitative analysis decomposes seasonal demand by call type to confirm the police-specific surge where the emergency-services measure is flat, and projects growth using population and housing forecasts against call-volume trends, the residency trajectory from roughly thirty thousand toward forty-five thousand under the planning agreement and up to fifty-five thousand with annexation, the unincorporated population using city services, and a calls-per-development figure. Supporting actions follow.
    a. Develop a seasonal deployment model. Define in-season and off-season deployment levels that scale to the peak demand curve rather than a flat year-round pattern, feeding the low, baseline, and high scenario framework, and sized by the C3 decomposition.
    b. Review event detail staffing and cost recovery. Separate vendor-billable security from the municipal traffic and parking functions the City currently absorbs, set

staffing and cost recovery accordingly, and define the patrol-backfill expectation, so the seasonal load is funded and planned rather than absorbed.

c. Redistrict zones and add a Zone Zero. Realign patrol-zone boundaries to current and projected demand as the city grows east and northeast and establish a Zone Zero for calls generated at the station itself so they no longer distort the host zone's workload.
d. Embed a calls-for-service impact assessment in development review. Estimate the police-call load of major proposed developments as a standing planning input, turning a one-time study finding into an ongoing practice and giving the Department a seat in the growth decisions that drive its workload.

13) **Stabilize and place the community-outreach and co-response functions.** The homelessness and mental-health outreach team, pairing a caseworker, an officer, and navigators, was praised across command, the special operations unit, and the governing body in theme A16 as an effective and humane response to a challenge expected to grow, with conventional enforcement seen as the wrong tool. Its funding is fragile, and its placement and success measures are unresolved, while the co-response relationship with fire and emergency services is strong but has structural gaps. The quantitative analysis quantifies co-response call volume and police-first-on-scene frequency, which sizes the workload the model absorbs, and the outreach team's contact and diversion counts, which turn the council's open measurement question into a number, with a mental-health co-response pilot running in the named zones. Two supporting actions follow.
    a. Stabilize and define the outreach team. Secure sustainable funding for the navigator positions beyond the current grant cycle and reduce reliance on donations, define the team's organizational home on the chart, which connects to the special-operations move at Recommendation 5, and a tasking protocol, since it now operates as an unbounded catch-all with requests arriving directly from city hall, and establish outcome metrics in the form of contact and diversion counts.
    b. Close the structural co-response gaps. Build police practice in incident-command and unified-command setup through joint training, move radio interoperability from dispatch relay toward shared channels, and align active-shooter planning regionally.
14) **Resolve the canine question on cause and effect, not raw usage alone.** Command reads the canine unit as low-utilization and not worth its cost, while the special operations unit and two council members read a deliberately degraded single-purpose program as the cause of that low utilization, the divergence theme C4 records, with building searches and apprehension now dependent on mutual aid from the county and a neighboring agency. The unresolved question is one of cause and effect, and the recommendation is a decision method rather than a predetermined answer. The quantitative analysis reads canine deployment and usage data against the frequency and response time of mutual-aid requests for building searches and apprehension, so the coverage gap a wind-down would

create is visible alongside the raw usage numbers. One supporting action defines that method.

a. Conduct a structured canine program assessment before any decision. Before any wind-down or investment, read the deployment and usage data against the mutual-aid reliance a wind-down would lock in and the specific use cases raised, namely a tracking dog for missing-person and elderly calls and an explosives-detection dog for the heavy event load, and separate whether low utilization reflects low value or a degraded single-purpose dog and compromised training time.

Full Methodology and Analyses

Chapter One: Organizational Chart

Purpose

This section presents the recommendations of Jones Solution Group, LLC (JSG) for reorganizing the command and supervisory structure of the Venice Police Department. The recommendations follow JSG's review of the Department's current organizational structure, work demands, span of control, and mission, and from the structured interviews and focus groups conducted with sworn command, patrol supervisors and line personnel, civilian staff, and elected officials. After reviewing these inputs, the assessment team reached consensus on the recommendations that follow. This memorandum accompanies and justifies the recommended organizational chart, and the two documents are intended to be read together. However, all final decisions regarding organizational structure and staffing should be considered in totality of the report, and not the organizational chart alone.

Two key points frame this recommendation.

a. **First**, the recommended reorganization is sworn-count neutral. It does not add a single sworn position. It reassigns existing positions into roles that better match the Department's demands and accountability needs, and its costs can be accommodated within the current fiscal year using salary funds available from open positions.
b. **Second**, the recommendations are not a menu of independent options. They function as one interconnecting system, in which each element depends on the others, and they should be evaluated as a whole rather than approved or reduced piece by piece.

This reorganization is an early-stage recommendation that is budget neutral. It is distinct from the separate staffing study now in development, which will address the question of additional positions. Any recommendation to add staff is a matter for city leadership to weigh

through the normal budget process and is not part of this reorganization. Approving this structural realignment does not commit the City to the staffing additions that the staffing study will address, and the budget-neutral nature of this step should not be read to suggest that the Department's staffing needs are fully met.

Observed Conditions

The most consistently corroborated theme in the assessment is unsustainable strain at the captain level. This condition was observed independently from three vantage points: (1) by command looking down through the organization, (2) by an affected division commander describing his own work week, and (3) by a civilian executive observing daily workflow. The recurring pattern is a commander who is unable to operate at his own level, pulled into day-to-day tasks rather than strategic oversight, and unable to find time to mentor the lieutenants who represent the Department's future captains. This is a succession risk as much as a workload risk, because the level responsible for developing the next generation of command cannot do so. The condition was described as worsening with anticipated growth.

A contributing cause is that the patrol captain has absorbed responsibilities that extend beyond operational command and encompass the duties commonly associated with an executive second in command. While the current structure has remained functional, the cumulative operational, administrative, and community-facing demands placed on a single position create an exceptionally broad span of control and limit long-term organizational resiliency. The Venice Police Department operates in a complex, service-oriented environment defined by significant public engagement expectations, seasonal population fluctuations, tourism activity, special events, intergovernmental coordination, and elevated responsiveness demands from both the community and municipal leadership. These conditions require sustained executive attention not only to daily operations but to strategic planning, organizational development, personnel management, policy oversight, accreditation, risk management, and continuity of command.

The assessment also documented the absence of a single accountable owner for internal affairs, accreditation, policy, and training. Patrol lieutenants investigating their own personnel undermines approachability and the leadership and management relationship, and line personnel become less willing to bring issues to a manager who may later investigate them. Accreditation has had no stable home, having passed among civilian managers and currently resting with an external contractor who has expressed the intent to retain the freedom to depart at will, with no succession plan in place. The Department previously lost accreditation during a period when a lieutenant held the function as a collateral duty. Personnel conducting internal-affairs investigations, which carry decertification and criminal-liability exposure if performed incorrectly, report not having received recurrent training in this area in years. Recruiting, background investigation support, and training oversight are likewise distributed as collateral duties rather than assigned to an accountable position. The Department has no owner for its recruiting message or candidate pipeline, and recent pay-for-experience improvements remain undersold because no position is responsible for marketing them. The retention pattern most worth addressing is the loss of experienced mid-career officers, generally those at the five-to-eight-year mark, to neighboring agencies. Training oversight is similarly fragmented, and personnel performing high-liability functions report gaps in recurrent training. These responsibilities depend on individual initiative rather than accountable ownership, and they are the first to lapse under operational pressure.

Finally, the assessment documented the absence of a designated supervisory backup below the rank of sergeant. When a sergeant is absent, the lieutenant collapses into an acting-sergeant role, and a prior attempt at a leaner lieutenant span-of-control model failed specifically because there was no effective backfill beneath the sergeant. The gap is sharpest on night shift, which is typically the youngest squad and the one most in need of on-scene supervision and mentorship, yet rarely has a senior officer in that role.

A Unique Source of the Strain

Most agencies require their personnel to serve in different roles or to wear multiple "hats." Venice Police Department personnel do so excessively. and this is a direct consequence of the quality, community-oriented service the agency provides that many comparable agencies do not. That service includes specialized fraud and financial-crime investigation, downtown quality-of-life policing, and a heavy special events load. These are now community expectations rather than discretionary additions. The relevant choice for the Department is not whether to continue offering these services, but whether to provide the command and supervisory structure that sustains them, or to accept the attrition and burnout that will erode them over time. The recommended reorganization is the structural answer to a strain that quality service has created.

Recommended Structure

The recommended reorganization makes four coordinated changes. All are accomplished by reassigning existing positions. The total number of sworn personnel does not change.

First, establish a Deputy Chief of Police by converting an existing Lieutenant position.

A Deputy Chief of Police is established directly below the Chief, overseeing the operational command tier of the Patrol Division Commander and the Support Services Division Commander. This position is created by converting one existing Lieutenant position; it is not an added position. The Deputy Chief absorbs the executive second-in-command function presently carried informally by the patrol captain, which relieves captain-level strain, returns the division commanders to focused division leadership, establishes unity of command and a clear chain of accountability, and creates a defined leadership ladder from lieutenant to captain to deputy chief that directly supports succession. The Chief Operating Officer continues to report directly to the Chief and remains at the same organizational level as the division commanders, retaining responsibility for the Department's business and civilian operations.

An earlier study recommended consolidating the deputy chief role for redundancy. The position recommended here is structurally different. It is a single deputy chief positioned above the operational command tier, justified by current demand, span-of-control strain, and anticipated growth, rather than a return to the earlier arrangement in which a deputy chief also ran a division and overlapped with a captain. This recommendation builds the structure forward for the agency Venice is becoming rather than restoring what was previously cut.

Comparative Findings from Peer Agencies. To confirm that the recommended structure reflects prevailing practice rather than internal preference, the assessment team examined the command structures of eight comparison agencies selected for the staffing study on the basis

of average city home value, seasonal population, and tourism activity. Five of the eight designate a single second in command, most commonly carrying the title of Deputy Chief. Only two agencies, Punta Gorda and Stuart, operate without such a position, and both do so through a structure of two genuinely co-equal captains rather than a dual-role command arrangement. Several agencies that maintain a single designated second in command are smaller than Venice. Vero Beach, and St. Augustine each serve a permanent population below that of Venice, yet each maintains a single designated executive deputy. Venice, with a permanent population of approximately thirty-two thousand residents and a seasonal peak approaching forty thousand, is larger than each of these agencies while currently lacking the clear executive command structure they consider standard.

Table 1.
Comparative Peer Agencies

Agency	**Single Second in Command**	**Title / Structure**
New Smyrna Beach	Yes	Deputy Chief
St. Augustine	Yes	Assistant Chief
Ormond Beach	Yes	Deputy Chief†
Vero Beach	Yes	Deputy Chief
Cocoa Beach	Yes	Deputy Chief
Fernandina Beach	No	Three equal Commanders
Punta Gorda	No	Two co-equal Captains
Stuart	No	Two co-equal Captains

†*Note: Ormond Beach carries a Deputy Police Chief position authorized in its FY2025 and FY2026 Pay and Classification Plans; the position is currently unfilled.*

Historical Background. The Venice Police Department historically maintained a dedicated administrative lieutenant accountable for internal affairs and accreditation as that position's defined responsibility. During recession-era budget reductions, an older administrative cohort retired, and these positions were eliminated rather than backfilled. Command recalls this sequence, and it is recognized internally that these were valuable functions that served the Department well before they were cut. With no administrative lieutenant to assign internal affairs cases to, the Department adopted a distributed model in which internal-affairs duties are rotated across patrol lieutenants. Command confirms this model persists today for a structural reason rather than by preference, because there is no administrative position to house the function, so trained and available patrol lieutenants absorb it. Over the years since, related functions, including policy, training, background investigations, and recruiting support, have likewise been scattered as collateral duties across the agency, driven by ongoing tasking pressure. The result is a set of professional standards functions with no single accountable manager. The recommendations that follow restore an accountability structure to necessary agency functions.

Second, establish a Professional Standards Lieutenant by reassigning an existing patrol Lieutenant position.

Reassign one existing patrol lieutenant position to a dedicated Professional Standards Lieutenant reporting directly to the Chief of Police. This direct reporting line is a professional best practice and preserves the investigative independence appropriate to the function. The position consolidates internal affairs, accreditation, policy development, and training oversight, and provides an accountable home for the orphaned background-investigation and recruiting-support functions. Reporting directly to the Chief, separate from the operational chain, removes the role conflict created when patrol supervisors investigate their own personnel, eliminates the single points of failure that have repeatedly placed accreditation at risk, and addresses the lapsed high-liability training documented in the assessment. For a community-facing agency operating under elevated public expectations, a dedicated Professional Standards function is a direct investment in transparency, accountability, liability reduction, and accreditation integrity, and it restores the accountable position eliminated during the recession-era reductions. This change is also a reassignment of an existing position rather than an addition.

Third, establish a Corporal on each squad by converting existing Master Police Officer and officer positions.

A Corporal position is established on each of the four patrol squads. These positions are created by formalizing the Department's existing Master Police Officer designation, of which there are currently two in patrol and one in the Marine Unit, and appointing two additional existing officer positions in patrol to reach five. The total number of sworn personnel is unchanged. The Corporal provides a genuine supervisory backup below the rank of sergeant, filling sergeant absences without pulling a call-taker off the road, and it is the load-bearing element that allows the leaner patrol lieutenant structure described below to function where a prior attempt failed for lack of such a backfill.

The Corporal is an appointed supervisory position deliberately designed as developmental roles, and their importance to leadership development cannot be overstated. They serve as proving ground for future sergeants, providing practical supervisory and leadership experiences, and create a structured promotional pipeline from officer to corporal to sergeant to lieutenant. The Corporal is an appointed and revocable assignment rather than a hard rank, which preserves the role as a developmental assignment rather than a locked in rank with limited opportunities aside from assistant supervisor. Unless filling in for an absent sergeant as the acting supervisor, each corporal is assigned a zone and a normal call load and counts toward manning as a deployable officer. This prevents the underutilization observed at some agencies, where corporals become idle backups rather than contributing to daily coverage. The corporal steps into a compensated acting-supervisor role only to fill a genuine sergeant absence, triggered by being logged in as the supervisor of record, which produces an auditable, system-defined record. This model produces a measurable operational gain. The corporal functions as a deployable call-taker by default, so the squad fields an additional officer on the road compared to the lieutenant-and-sergeant structure, in which the lieutenant absorbed supervisory duties without adding field capacity. A member of the governing body, unprompted, expressed the desire for a supervisory tier between officer and sergeant, describing an assignment that could serve as an

assistant to sergeants and as shift supervisor in their absence. This independent convergence, arrived at by a member of the governing body, strengthens the case beyond internally generated discussions.

Fourth, organize patrol under an A Side and B Side Lieutenant structure.

Patrol is reorganized from four lieutenants to two lieutenants, an A Side Lieutenant and a B Side Lieutenant. Each lieutenant oversees two sergeants and two corporals, providing continuous twenty-four-hour coverage across day and night squads on each side. Each lieutenant works the same schedule as their assigned A or B shift, which gives the watch commander strategic flexibility to meet operational demands while attending to administrative responsibilities. Working in step with their side allows lieutenants to anticipate operational demands and to balance administrative and work-assignment needs for the squads they oversee. This structure narrows the lieutenant span of control to a manageable and sustainable level and tightens the line between shift-level supervision and division command, while the corporal layer beneath each sergeant supplies the supervisory backup that makes the model durable. The lieutenant remains an essential part of the structure; what changes is that the supervisory load is distributed across a stable chain of sergeant and corporal rather than concentrated or left without backfill.

Fiscal Effect

The recommended reorganization is sworn-count neutral and budget neutral within the current fiscal year, allowing for immediate consideration of implementation. . One Lieutenant position would be converted to the Deputy Chief, a second patrol Lieutenant position reassigned to the Professional Standards Lieutenant, and existing Master Police Officer and officer positions are converted to the four Corporal assignments. No new sworn positions are created. The associated costs can be accommodated within the current fiscal year using salary funds available from open positions. The recommendation for addition is future oriented personnel for city leadership to weigh through the budget process and is not part of this reorganization.

Summary of Anticipated Benefits. Taken together, the recommended changes are expected to produce the following benefits:

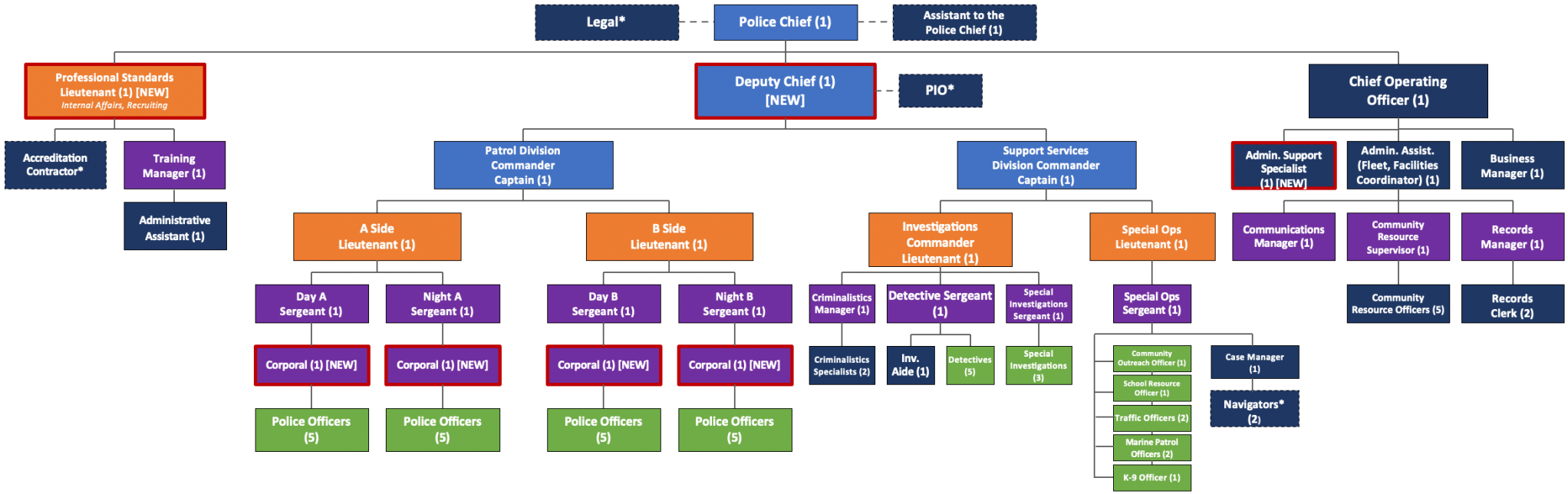
1. Relief of captain-level strain by separating the executive second-in-command function from division command.
2. Alignment with prevailing peer practice, as five of eight comparison agencies, several of them smaller than Venice, designate a single second in command.
3. Restored accountability and reduced liability through a dedicated Professional Standards function reporting directly to the Chief.
4. A genuine supervisory backup on every squad, with the corporal providing both acting supervision and direct call-for-service capacity.
5. Strengthened leadership development and a clear promotional pipeline through the appointed corporal positions.
6. A sustainable patrol span of control under the A Side and B Side lieutenant structure.
7. Continuity of command and improved succession readiness across the command tier.
8. A structure positioned to support the City's documented growth, accomplished at no increase in sworn strength and within the current fiscal year.

Recommendation

Jones Solution Group recommends that the Venice Police Department adopt the reorganization presented in this memorandum and reflected in the accompanying organizational chart. The recommendation rests not on agency size alone, but on the cumulative operational complexity, executive span of control, administrative demands, and community-service expectations placed on the current structure, and it is corroborated by the practices of comparable Florida municipal agencies. The recommended structure provides the Department with the executive capacity, accountability, and supervisory stability appropriate to a growing and highly community-facing agency, and it does so at no increase in sworn strength and within existing resources. JSG welcomes the opportunity to discuss these recommendations further and to support the Department in any phased implementation the Chief may direct.

VENICE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Prepared by Jones Solution Group, LLC



SWORN

Chief of Police	1
Deputy Chief	1
Captain	2
Lieutenants	5
Sergeants	7
Corporals	5
Detectives	8
Officers	26
Total Sworn	**55**

CIVILIANS

Chief Operating Officer	1	Investigative Aide	1
Communications Manager	1	Comm. Resource Supervisor	1
Records Manager	1	Comm. Resource Officers	5
Records Clerk	2	Case Manager	1
Assistant to Police Chief	1	Training Manager	1
Administrative Assistants	2	Customer Service Rep.	1
Criminalistics Manager	1		
Criminalistics Specialist	2		
Business Manager	1		
Total Civilian	**22**		

TOTAL ALLOCATED POSITIONS - 77

Command
Lieutenants
Sergeants/Civilian Supervisors
Sworn Officers
Civilians
[NEW] = New Position (red border)

** PIO, Legal, and Accreditation Contractor are advisory or contracted positions, not full-time PD employees and not counted in civilian totals. Several positions carry collateral duties not shown on chart.*

Chapter Two: Qualitative Analyses

Purpose

This document organizes the findings from the qualitative data collection into a single thematic structure. It is the analyst-facing companion to the structured map and is meant to be marked up and revised. The themes here are drawn from the full set of loaded sessions across sworn personnel, civilian personnel, city management, city departments, elected officials, partner agencies, and community representatives.

The map is organized into three parts. Part A contains the cross-cutting themes that surfaced across three or more stakeholder groupings. Part B contains themes that are specific to a single group or function. Part C contains the points of genuine divergence, where two informed vantages reach different conclusions from the same situation and where the quantitative analysis will need to adjudicate.

Each theme carries a short set of labels. **Stakeholder coverage** names the groupings that spoke to the theme. **Strength** is a single verdict, Strong or Tentative, derived from how broadly the theme triangulates and how central it was to the sessions, not a separate score. **Anticipated quantitative cross-reference** is a one-line pointer to where the CAD, RMS, overtime, or comparative data will confirm, qualify, or test the theme. **Scope-of-work alignment** ties the theme to the contracted study items. No individual is named anywhere in this document; people are referenced by role or rank.

Part A. Cross-Cutting Themes

The themes in this part were raised independently across multiple stakeholder groupings. They form the spine of the qualitative findings and align most directly with the central staffing and structure questions in the engagement.

A1. Chronic understaffing, where maximum staffing functions as the minimum

Sub-themes: *authorized strength versus working strength; the compounding effect of unfilled vacancies; loss of one or two officers felt acutely; mandatory overtime; reactive posture replacing proactive work*

Personnel across every sworn level described an agency in which the authorized number of officers has become the practical floor rather than a cushion. Patrol routinely runs three to four officers on a shift, and the loss of one or two to leave, light duty, training, or an arrest is felt immediately. Command described a continual shell game in which investigations and special operations are drained to keep patrol staffed, and the special operations unit described that same shell game from the receiving end, with its traffic, marine unit, and canine positions pulled back to fill minimum patrol staffing.

Unfilled vacancies compound the problem. A vacant position is felt the same way as an officer lost to leave or light duty, except that it does not return until the position is filled, and the gap it leaves must be covered through mandatory overtime rather than absorbed. Personnel described being ordered in to cover these gaps on short notice, and described the mandatory overtime call-

in as being issued without regard to who has already volunteered for details, so the officers who step up to staff details and events are stressed further by being ordered in on top of that, a strain that sharpens during the season.

The consequence named most often was a forced shift from a proactive posture to a reactive one. Supervisors and officers described being unable to run the proactive work that defines the job, hunting warrants, directed patrol at known hot spots, intentional DUI enforcement, and traffic enforcement, because the squad must hold capacity for the next emergency call. They described this reactive posture as the normal operating condition rather than the exception. One supervisor summarized the underlying problem by saying that maximum staffing has become the minimum.

Stakeholder coverage: Sworn command staff, patrol lieutenants and sergeants, patrol officers, the special operations unit, fire and emergency services, human resources, and most members of city council.

Strength: Strong

Anticipated quantitative cross-reference: CAD call volume and self-initiated activity over the multi-year window; percentage of authorized strength actually available after vacancies, leave, and light duty; mandatory overtime hours tied to coverage gaps. Expect this to be the principal point where measured workload and perceived load are compared.

Scope-of-work alignment: Sworn staffing levels; deployment and workload analysis; staffing modeling.

A2. Excessive responsibilities and role overload as a feature of a small full-service agency

Sub-themes: *every supervisor carrying multiple collateral functions; outdated and generic job descriptions; mission creep; specialized work not captured in any position description*

Personnel at every level described carrying collateral duties well beyond their titled role. Lieutenants were described as covering digital forensics, internal affairs, training, the drone program, budgets, and forms simultaneously. The patrol division commander enumerated recruiting, fleet, ordinance review, honor guard, travel and expense review, and vehicle build specifications as duties outside any written description.

Command framed this not as a complaint but as the cost of being a small full-service agency that meets a high service expectation. Personnel spoke with evident pride in the level and type of service the agency delivers to the community, and that pride is part of why the overload persists, since members take on the additional work rather than let the quality of service drop. The recurring concern was that important and highly technical work, particularly digital forensics and fraud, sits in no formal job description, which makes the work invisible when positions are justified and fragile when the person carrying it leaves.

Stakeholder coverage: Sworn command staff, patrol supervisors, detectives, civilian administrative staff, communications and technology, finance, and elected officials.

Strength: Strong

Anticipated quantitative cross-reference: Position-description audit against actual assigned functions; mapping of collateral duties to manhours. The patrol productivity supplement quantifying non-patrol activity is a direct input here.

Scope-of-work alignment: Organizational structure review; supervisory span of control and management layers.

A3. Command-tier strain on the patrol division commander

Sub-themes: *an executive second-in-command function absorbed informally by the patrol commander; span of control well above accepted ranges; no time for strategic oversight or for mentoring the next generation of command; succession risk; special operations adding to the patrol span*

The most consistently corroborated structural condition was unsustainable strain on the patrol division commander. The same condition was described from three vantages: by command looking down through the organization, by the affected division commander describing his own work week, and by a member of the police executive command staff observing daily workflow. The recurring pattern is a commander pulled into day-to-day tasks rather than strategic oversight, with no time to mentor the lieutenants who are the next generation of command, which makes this a succession risk as much as a workload problem.

The concrete evidence beneath the condition is the account the commander gave of a span of control in the range of forty-two direct and indirect reports, and a description of having absorbed responsibilities that extend beyond operational command into the duties commonly associated with an executive second in command. Both captains and the command group endorsed evening out the chart, most concretely by moving special operations out from under patrol and over to support services, described as the most immediate structural relief available without adding a position. Personnel framed the strain as worsening with the growth the department anticipates.

Stakeholder coverage: Sworn command staff, both captains, patrol sergeants, and a member of the police executive command staff.

Strength: Strong

Anticipated quantitative cross-reference: Span-of-control ratios against accepted benchmarks; current reporting counts by division. The qualitative basis the reorganization memo cites for the deputy chief recommendation, alongside the peer-agency comparison.

Scope-of-work alignment: Supervisory span of control and management-layer assessment; organizational structure review.

A4. Alternative supervisory structures, with an A-side and B-side model drawing support

Sub-themes: *patrol engaged on several supervisory configurations; an A-side and B-side lieutenant model emerging as the preferred one; a sergeant and an alternate supervisor at the corporal level on each squad; backfill that keeps a lieutenant from collapsing into an acting*

sergeant; the alternate supervisor works calls when not acting; developmental value for officers on a leadership path

Patrol was engaged on several alternative supervisory configurations, and the structure that drew support was an A-side and B-side lieutenant model in which each lieutenant oversees a side, with a sergeant and an alternate supervisor at the corporal level on each squad, replacing the lieutenant-and-sergeant-per-squad arrangement. The key requirement personnel named was real backfill beneath the sergeant, citing a prior attempt at a leaner lieutenant structure that failed because the lieutenant simply became an acting sergeant. The alternate supervisor fills that gap, running the squad when the sergeant is away and taking calls as a working member of the squad when not acting as supervisor, so the position adds capacity rather than removing a body from the road.

Patrol officers expressed favorable opinions on the position, both for its developmental value as a path toward leadership and for its function as a call-taker when not acting as supervisor. The position was described as carrying acting authority and pay only when serving as supervisor of record, which personnel tied to avoiding the underutilization seen where such a role becomes a permanent rank that stops taking calls. An elected official independently described a rank between officer and sergeant, which corroborates the concept from outside the department. The gap was described as sharpest on night shift, which is typically the youngest squad and the one most in need of on-scene supervision and mentorship, yet rarely has a senior officer in that role. The special operations unit described the same gap from another angle, noting that its own lieutenant is pulled in to cover as a patrol supervisor when the road is short a supervisor, which both confirms the shortage of supervisory backfill and pulls the unit away from its assigned work.

Stakeholder coverage: Sworn command staff, both captains, patrol lieutenants and sergeants, patrol officers, the special operations unit, and at least one elected official.

Strength: Strong

Anticipated quantitative cross-reference: Supervisory coverage gaps by shift; frequency with which a lieutenant or sergeant is the sole supervisor on duty. The qualitative basis the reorganization memo cites for the corporal and the two-lieutenant patrol structure.

Scope-of-work alignment: Supervisory span of control and management-layer assessment; organizational structure review.

A5. The professional standards and administrative lieutenant gap

Sub-themes: *internal affairs handled as an added duty on top of squad management; an administrative lieutenant position eliminated during recession-era cuts and never restored; accreditation, policy, and training accountability gap; training division without a settled sworn home*

Internal affairs investigations currently fall to patrol lieutenants as an additional duty layered on top of managing a squad, a function that in most police departments sits separately from patrol supervision. Command stated directly that the department once had a dedicated administrative lieutenant, in place when the longest-tenured command member started, who handled internal

affairs along with accreditation as the defined responsibility of that role. During the great recession, as an older administrative cohort retired, that position and others were cut rather than backfilled, and the function was distributed across patrol lieutenants because there was no administrative position left to house it. The department previously lost its accreditation during a period when a lieutenant held the function as a collateral duty, and personnel who conduct internal-affairs investigations, which carry decertification and criminal-liability exposure if performed incorrectly, reported not having received recurrent training in that area in years. The training function was likewise described as lacking a settled and appropriate place on the chart.

Personnel and practice both pointed toward consolidating internal affairs, accreditation, policy, and training under a single accountable position, with the orphaned background-investigation and recruiting-support functions folded in, and toward having that position report directly to the chief to preserve the investigative independence appropriate to the function and to remove the conflict created when patrol supervisors investigate their own personnel. Accreditation and policy work is currently carried by a contracted retiree, an arrangement personnel praised for quality while noting that the contractor intends to retain the freedom to depart at will and that no succession plan is in place.

Stakeholder coverage: Sworn command staff, both captains, patrol lieutenants, and the accreditation function.

Strength: Strong

Anticipated quantitative cross-reference: Internal affairs caseload and the manhours patrol lieutenants spend on it; accreditation and policy workload; recurrent-training records for high-liability functions. The qualitative basis the reorganization memo cites for the professional standards lieutenant, framed as restoration of a previously eliminated position rather than new growth.

Scope-of-work alignment: Organizational structure review; supervisory span of control and management layers.

A6. Recruiting and retention as a systemic constraint, not an event

Sub-themes: *no dedicated recruiter or marketing presence; out-of-state hires churning while in-state and mid-career hires stay; pension and pay changes; the take-home-vehicle radius as a recruiting disadvantage; backgrounds washing out roughly half of applicants; inability to backfill as the historical reason structural changes failed*

Personnel described recruiting as a function that nobody formally owns, with no dedicated recruiter and little marketing or social media presence. The pattern observed was that out-of-state hires, particularly from the northeast, tend to be transient, while in-state and mid-career hires stay. Pay-for-experience and a higher entry salary were credited with improving recruitability, while a past pension change did not produce the recruiting lift that had been hoped for.

The take-home-vehicle policy surfaced as a specific recruiting disadvantage. Officers who take part in the employee referral system reported that experienced candidates ask about the take-home-

car policy early, and that the twenty-mile radius is overly limiting for candidates from neighboring counties, who would have to relocate or give up the benefit to take the job.

The retention side connects directly to structure, and the connection is a present condition. The department is not able to hold its current working strength, and the gap is wider than the vacancy count alone shows. Positions sit unfilled, the gaps are absorbed through mandatory overtime, and command described a "continual shell game" in which traffic, canine, and marine positions are reassigned to patrol to backfill empty patrol slots. This is further exacerbated, in retention terms, by investigations, traffic, and the marine unit carrying their own unfilled positions under the same constraint.

Vacancy numbers can understate the problem, because a position can read as filled while remaining functionally empty. A new officer sponsored through the academy counts as a filled position immediately yet is generally at least nine months from completing field training and holding a zone independently. The reassignment of senior officers out of professional and

specialty units back into patrol is a significant retention concern in its own right, because it removes the specialized work that drew those officers and gave them a reason to stay. The loss that matters most is the experienced mid-career officer, generally at the five-to-eight-year mark, who leaves for another agency, while new trainee washouts are viewed as expected, and the departure of a senior officer represents a loss of training investment and operational capability that a washout does not. Civilian positions present a separate version of the same constraint, since positions are hard to fill when pay benchmarks rely on inland comparisons that sit below the coastal cost of living.

Membership in the Florida Retirement System shapes both sides of recruiting and retention. Elected officials described that membership as a blessing and a curse, because the same statewide system that lets the department recruit experienced officers from other participating agencies also lets its own officers leave for any other participating agency, including the county, and carry their retirement with no penalty. In a market where the county offers a starting salary five thousand ahead of the department's starting pay, with added pay for years of law enforcement experience, that FRS portability works against the department more than in its favor.

Stakeholder coverage: Sworn command staff, both captains, patrol supervisors and officers, human resources, city management, and city council.

Strength: Strong

Anticipated quantitative cross-reference: Turnover and tenure by hire origin and entry pathway; time-to-fill and background washout rates; residency distribution against the take-home-vehicle radius; civilian pay against true coastal comparables. The comparative agency analysis supports the pay benchmarking question.

Scope-of-work alignment: Population and demand analysis; staffing modeling; comparative analysis.

A7. Seasonal and event load, where the agency operates as two departments in one

Sub-themes: *peak season from late fall through spring; dozens of permitted events concentrated in a few months; red days around holidays; in-season training conflicts with details; detail officers pulled into core city functions*

Sworn personnel described a seasonal swing so pronounced that the agency effectively operates as two departments across the year. Peak runs from late fall through spring, with a heavy concentration of permitted events in the early-spring weeks and maximum deployment days (red days) around the major holidays when no leave is granted. Training scheduled in season collides with the detail and event load.

The seasonal population increase was corroborated broadly across city departments, with the events, planning, and public works groups all describing the same late-fall-through-spring rise in population and activity. Elected officials added a way of sizing the load, describing a day-use population on the order of four non-residents for every resident present in the city during peak periods, a ratio they expect to grow with surrounding development, which strains both call volume and the ability to move through traffic to reach calls. A specific and recurring observation from sworn personnel was that detail officers at events frequently get pulled into core city functions such as traffic and parking management, beyond the security the event vendor requested, which means event staffing cannot be trimmed as far as the vendor scope alone would suggest. When a detail officer makes an arrest or is otherwise tied up, patrol must backfill the detail. A council member confirmed that traffic and marine officers are pulled from their assigned duties to hold minimum patrol staffing during the season.

Stakeholder coverage: Sworn command staff, both captains, patrol supervisors and officers, city departments, community representatives, and city council.

Strength: Strong

Anticipated quantitative cross-reference: Seasonal call-volume and event-related demand curves from CAD; permitted-event counts by month. See the divergence in Part C on how the measured seasonal effect differs between police-side demand and emergency-services call volume.

Scope-of-work alignment: Seasonal and event fluctuation analysis; deployment and workload analysis.

A8. Details and overtime, with a possible generational divide

Sub-themes: *the same personnel repeatedly working details; younger personnel declining detail work; details that must be worked or lost to other agencies; mandatory overtime resented by those who already volunteer*

Personnel described a recurring pattern in which a familiar set of faces works the bulk of the details while a portion of the younger workforce declines. The fairness concern was specific: officers who sign up for details described then being hammered with mandatory overtime orders to work, while others who decline face no equivalent consequence, so the willing carry both the voluntary detail

load and a disproportionate share of the forced overtime. Detectives sit near the top of the forced-overtime list because they are routinely off on weekends, which compounds the same fairness problem in their unit. Command connected the broader pattern to a generational shift in attitudes toward discretionary work and on-call expectations, and described it as a future threat if the pool of willing personnel continues to narrow.

Personnel also noted that details which cannot be filled internally are at risk of going to other agencies. Setting aside the largest events, where some outside support is expected, officers, often the senior members who work these details most, wanted the Department able to fill its own assignments, both for the off-duty earnings and for the standing community relationships a Venice officer maintains that an outside agency cannot.**Stakeholder coverage:** Sworn command staff, a captain, patrol supervisors and officers, finance, city management, and an elected official.

Strength: Strong

Anticipated quantitative cross-reference: Cross-reference of the overtime and detail log against officer years of service to test the generational hypothesis directly. This is a committed analysis rather than a speculative one.

Scope-of-work alignment: Deployment and workload analysis; staffing modeling.

A9. City systems and administrative inflexibility

Sub-themes: *archaic payroll separate from scheduling; many disconnected software logins; citywide systems that treat all departments alike; hiring rigidity; efficiency gains blocked at the city level*

Personnel across sworn and civilian functions described a set of administrative systems that consume time the department cannot spare. Payroll runs on an archaic process that is separate from scheduling and from the citywide finance system, requiring duplicate manual work. Officers and supervisors work across a long list of disconnected logins across dispatch, records, the license-plate reader system, patrol-request tools, body cameras, and collaboration software, several of which do not talk to one another.

The broader frustration was that citywide policy treats the police department like every other department despite its around-the-clock operation, and that proposed efficiency improvements have been slowed or blocked at the city level. The disconnected payroll and scheduling systems generate a recurring administrative burden at the start of each pay week, when supervisors spend significant time chasing down electronic approvals and, when someone calls in sick against minimum staffing, working through the scheduling program and a sequence of phone calls to determine who is next in line to be ordered in. Hiring rigidity, including the inability to post a position until it is formally vacated, was named as a concrete driver of coverage gaps.

Stakeholder coverage: Sworn command staff, patrol supervisors, the police executive command staff, communications and technology, and finance.

Strength: Strong

Anticipated quantitative cross-reference: Manhours spent on payroll reconciliation and cross-system data entry; system inventory and integration gaps. Civilian interviews are the primary source; quantification is secondary.

Scope-of-work alignment: Infrastructure and technology evaluation; organizational structure review.

A10. Communication across squads and between patrol and investigations

Sub-themes: *strong within-squad communication but weak across opposite shifts; investigations-to-patrol case feedback that lapsed when staffing dropped; isolation of the night shift*

Personnel described communication within a squad as strong, in some cases graded at the top of the scale, while communication across opposite shifts was described as minimal because those personnel rarely see one another in person and rely on email. The night shift in particular was described as isolated from the information stream.

A specific mechanism that had worked, in which detectives were assigned to brief individual squads on case progress, lapsed when investigations staffing fell and has not been restored. Personnel on both sides framed this as a capacity problem rather than unwillingness, with senior officers more likely than junior officers to pick up the phone to close the loop on a case.

Stakeholder coverage: Sworn command staff, both captains, patrol supervisors and officers, and detectives.

Strength: Strong

Anticipated quantitative cross-reference: Limited direct quantitative analog. May be reflected indirectly in case-status and report-turnaround timing if available.

Scope-of-work alignment: Organizational structure review; deployment and workload analysis.

A11. Quality-of-service expectation and community-oriented policing

Sub-themes: *a full-service excellence-in-service standard; policing of quality-of-life matters; perceived service equity between the island and the mainland; very high community support; the excessive-hats condition as the assessment team's interpretation*

Personnel consistently described a service standard set well above what the staffing would suggest, rooted in a full-service, excellence-in-service identity. The department provides a wide range of quality-of-life services and is expected to respond fully to them. Command described the resulting multiple-hats burden as shared across the whole department, on the reasoning that a small agency cannot specialize and everyone has to be able to do everything.

The assessment team interpreted this pattern as the excessive-hats condition: the role overload documented in A2 is best understood as a consequence of the quality, community-oriented service the agency provides rather than as a sign of disorganization, which is the same framing carried into

the reorganization memo. This is an interpretation the assessment placed on the findings, not a characterization personnel themselves offered.

Personnel and community representatives described very high community support, evidenced by funding for equipment and past referendum support. Elected officials independently rated the department reputation in the community as excellent, and a council member described a white-glove service expectation in which residents want an officer who helps them through the aftermath of an incident rather than simply taking a report. There was also a recurring perception of a service-equity question between the historically served island and the growing mainland and northeastern areas of the city.

Stakeholder coverage: Sworn command staff, patrol supervisors and officers, community representatives, and city council.

Strength: Strong

Anticipated quantitative cross-reference: Calls-for-service mix and geographic distribution; proactive versus reactive time split. Supports framing rather than a single metric.

Scope-of-work alignment: Population and demand analysis; deployment and workload analysis.

A12. Civilianization and the value of community resource and investigative support roles

Sub-themes: *community resource officers absorbing reports, crashes, code, and parking; an investigative aide functioning as a force multiplier; a process, technology, then people sequence; debate over where civilian roles report*

Personnel and the engagement methodology both pointed toward civilian roles as a way to free sworn officers for sworn work. Community resource officers were described as handling reports, crashes, code enforcement, and parking from start to finish. An investigative aide who is a former detective was described as a substantial multiplier on fraud, cryptocurrency tracing, backgrounds, and subpoenas.

The advocated sequence was to look at process and technology before adding people, since people are the most expensive resource, and to aim for civilian coverage on every shift. There was an unresolved question about where these civilian roles should report, whether under the Patrol Captain or the Chief Operating Officer.

Stakeholder coverage: Sworn command staff, both captains, detectives, the police executive command staff, the accreditation function, and city management.

Strength: Strong

Anticipated quantitative cross-reference: Share of calls and tasks divertible to civilians; current civilian coverage by shift. Civilian staffing modeling is a named next step.

Scope-of-work alignment: Deployment and workload analysis; staffing modeling; organizational structure review.

A13. Growth and development reshaping demand

Sub-themes: *apartment density generating disproportionate calls; eastern expansion and large retail and medical development; a regional sports facility drawing population into the city; a changing mix of call types; multiple distinct service areas; rising response times projected with growth*

Personnel and city management described a development trajectory that is changing the volume, the geography, and the types of demand. Apartment density was described as generating a disproportionate share of calls. Eastern expansion, large retail openings, a hospital tower, and a nearby regional sports facility were all named as drawing more people into the city even when the development itself sits outside city limits, and as bringing new call types with them, from retail theft and gift-card fraud to the traffic and crash load that follows commercial growth.

Personnel described the city as effectively several distinct service areas, with the historically served island, the central core, and the growing east and northeast each presenting different demands. City management projected that response times could rise materially within a few years as growth outpaces a flat sworn complement. The eastern patrol zones were described as having grown from rural to call-generating, with domestics there now requiring two-officer responses across long distances. A council member put concrete figures on the trajectory, describing a city that has grown from the twenties to roughly thirty thousand residents and that is expected to reach about forty-five thousand under the current planning agreement and as much as fifty-five thousand if a contemplated annexation proceeds, with the northeast as the least-served and fastest-developing area and major projects including a seaboard redevelopment and a relocated water plant adding to demand. Elected officials identified traffic as the primary growth impact, worsened by a large unincorporated population that uses city roads and services and often believes it lives in the city.

Stakeholder coverage: Sworn command staff, patrol supervisors and officers, city management, city departments, community representatives, and city council.

Strength: Strong

Anticipated quantitative cross-reference: Population and housing projections against call-volume trends; response-time trend by zone; calls-per-development analysis. This is a core input to the five-to-ten-year projection.

Scope-of-work alignment: Population and demand analysis; staffing modeling; threat and risk assessment.

A14. The changing nature of investigations

Sub-themes: *caseload shifting from burglary toward fraud, cryptocurrency, and elder exploitation; rising digital evidence and subpoena demand; in-house digital forensics difficult to staff and retain; underreported and seasonally concentrated fraud*

Detectives and command described a fundamental shift in the investigative caseload away from traditional property crime and toward fraud, cryptocurrency, and elder financial exploitation.

Fraud was described as the dominant share of investigations, with cryptocurrency losses in the millions across recent years and a recognition that these crimes are underreported. Detectives also noted that once the department actively works elder cases, it tends to uncover more of them, since much of this crime goes unreported until someone looks for it. While this is common for all investigative actions in policing, the nature and demands of these particular crimes compounds the time and attention needed for investigations.

The work is increasingly digital, with most search warrants now directed at phones and digital products and a growing demand for digital forensics. Personnel described the in-house digital forensics capability as both essential and very hard to retain, since trained personnel are recruited away to far higher private-sector pay. Detectives anticipated that new large retail openings would further increase gift-card and related fraud.

Stakeholder coverage: Sworn command staff, a captain, detectives, the investigative aide function, and city management.

Strength: Strong

Anticipated quantitative cross-reference: Five-year investigative case-type trend; clearance and asset-recovery rates; digital-evidence volume. See Part C for the divergence on cases per detective.

Scope-of-work alignment: Population and demand analysis; deployment and workload analysis; threat and risk assessment.

A15. Jail transport as a recurring drain on patrol capacity

Sub-themes: *the closure of the nearby holding facility; long round-trip transport times; medical-clearance detours; a three-person squad losing a third of its strength to one arrest*

The closure of the nearby county jail holding facility was described as a persistent drain on patrol capacity. An arrest now removes an officer from the city for a multi-hour round trip, and a single arrest can take a quarter of a shift or more. On a minimum three-person squad, this leaves the city thin enough that a second arrest or a serious call forces a call to the sheriff for help.

Personnel described medical-clearance requirements that add a further detour to a regional hospital before booking. The cumulative effect pushes the squad into a reactive posture for the duration. A partner agency independently recounted an instance in which transport limits affected a release decision.

Stakeholder coverage: Sworn command staff, patrol supervisors and officers, fire and emergency services, city management, and an elected official.

Strength: Strong

Anticipated quantitative cross-reference: Out-of-service time per arrest, extractable from CAD via mileage and status timing; arrests per shift against minimum staffing. A concrete and quantifiable workload driver.

Scope-of-work alignment: Deployment and workload analysis; staffing modeling.

A16. Co-response with fire and emergency services

Sub-themes: *automatic police dispatch to medical and behavioral calls; police often first on scene with life-saving equipment; a community outreach team for homelessness and mental health; gaps in incident-command alignment and radio interoperability*

Personnel on both sides described a smooth working relationship in which police are automatically dispatched alongside fire and emergency services to cardiac, unconscious-person, overdose, and behavioral calls, and are often first on scene with an automated defibrillator or naloxone. The relationship was characterized as cooperative with little friction.

The gaps named were structural rather than relational. Incident-command setup and unified command were described as areas where police are less practiced, radio interoperability runs through dispatch relay rather than shared channels, and active-shooter planning needs regional alignment. A community outreach team pairing a caseworker, an officer, and navigators was described as the department vehicle for homelessness and mental-health response, with both praise for outcomes and an open question about how to measure success and where the team should sit.

The special operations unit, which houses the outreach team, gave the fullest account of it. The team functions as a catch-all for community problems across the city, with requests arriving directly from city hall, and the members described altering their own schedules to resolve crises because the area has few emergency resources, for example placing a parent and child in shelter on a Friday evening. Its funding is fragile: the navigator positions are grant funded through the end of the calendar year and dependent on renewal, and the resources the program offers are largely donation funded. Council members praised the team as an effective and humane response to a homelessness challenge they expect to grow, and described conventional enforcement as the wrong tool for it.

Stakeholder coverage: Sworn command staff, a captain, patrol supervisors and officers, the special operations unit, fire and emergency services, a partner hospital, and city council.

Strength: Strong

Anticipated quantitative cross-reference: Co-response call volume and police-first-on-scene frequency; community outreach team contact and diversion counts. Directly addresses the contracted co-response item.

Scope-of-work alignment: Co-response analysis with fire and emergency services; deployment and workload analysis.

Part B. Group-Specific and Functional Themes

The themes in this part were concentrated in a single function or group. They matter for the organizational and infrastructure findings even though they did not triangulate across the full set of groupings.

B1. Records as the one function reporting adequate staffing, with redaction as the new load

Sub-themes: *the only group describing its staffing as sufficient; body-camera redaction as the principal new burden; a request for part-time public-records help*

Records was the single group that described its current staffing as adequate. The principal new burden named was body-camera footage redaction, where an hour of video can take two to three hours to redact, a load that grew when the function moved to records with the full body-camera program. The group asked for a part-time public-records support position.

Stakeholder coverage: Civilian records staff.

Strength: Strong

Anticipated quantitative cross-reference: Redaction hours per footage hour; public-records request volume and turnaround. A bounded, quantifiable civilian workload question.

Scope-of-work alignment: Infrastructure and technology evaluation; staffing modeling.

B2. Communications and technology as a single point of failure

Sub-themes: *one manager carrying all department technology; a designated alternate covering only a narrow scope; a substantial pay gap against the county; support requests deferred behind sworn hiring; key-person risk framed as a major operational threat; a recommendation to split the function*

The communications and technology function was described as resting on one long-tenured person who carries responsibility for essentially all department technology, a scope the title understates, with the designated alternate able to cover only a narrow set of routine matters. This concentration was framed as a major operational threat rather than a staffing preference, since the systems the agency now depends on, dispatch, records, the license-plate reader network, body cameras, and the rest, all run through a single person, and an absence or departure would expose the department across every one of them. The authority of the manager is also limited when the county mandates technology changes without prior consultation, which adds platforms to the same single workload. Personnel described a substantial pay disparity against the county, on the order of thirty thousand dollars for comparable work, alongside a pattern of support requests being deferred because sworn hiring takes priority. The recommendation that surfaced was to separate communications from technology and to add a dedicated technology hire, both to reduce the key-person risk and to keep pace with the technology load described elsewhere in this map.

Stakeholder coverage: Civilian communications and technology function; corroborated by command observations on technology growth.

Strength: Strong

Anticipated quantitative cross-reference: Technology workload and system count per staff member; pay against county comparables. Single-source but specific.

Scope-of-work alignment: Infrastructure and technology evaluation; organizational structure review.

B3. Finance and administrative perspective on organizational stability

Sub-themes: *frequent restructuring perceived as a sign of disorganization; a long-vacant administrative coordinator position; hurricane staffing without a clear who-reports policy*

The finance and administrative perspective introduced a counterpoint to the restructuring discussion, describing frequent organizational-chart changes as a signal of disorganization rather than progress. Personnel pointed to an administrative coordinator position that had sat vacant for more than a year and to hurricane staffing arrangements that lack a clear policy on who is required to report, with too many non-essential staff called in. This vantage matters because it is the one most likely to scrutinize the cost and stability case for any structural change.

Stakeholder coverage: Finance and administrative function.

Strength: Tentative

Anticipated quantitative cross-reference: Vacancy duration and coverage history for administrative positions; emergency-staffing rosters. Useful as a stability check on restructuring recommendations.

Scope-of-work alignment: Organizational structure review; infrastructure and technology evaluation.

B4. The elected-official information gap and reception environment

Sub-themes: *a perceived absence of crime statistics reaching the council; prior administrative filtering of staffing requests; interest in comparables and span-of-control validation; interest in alternative service and staffing models; a fiscally cautious council reluctant to add senior positions; limited public-safety experience among new city leadership; an asymmetry in how police and fire requests are received*

Council members described an information gap, with at least one noting an absence of crime statistics reaching the council over a multi-year period and a sense that prior city administration filtered staffing requests before they reached elected officials. A more recent openness at the city-management level was noted. Council members expressed a clear appetite for the kinds of evidence this study produces: peer comparables, an independent check on whether the structure is appropriately balanced, and innovation in service and staffing models, including peak-demand staffing approaches and volunteer or citizen-patrol concepts drawn from other agencies. One council member qualified the value of peer comparables for the staffing question itself, preferring Venice-specific data, while valuing comparables for pay benchmarking.

The reception environment is as important as the information gap, and a council member described it directly. The council was characterized as fiscally cautious and reluctant to add senior positions, with a stated preference to reduce senior roles in order to fund line-level officers, which means a recommendation to add command or supervisory structure faces resistance unless it first demonstrates value at the patrol level. The same vantage described an asymmetry in which fire-service requests tend to be received more readily than police requests, and noted that recent turnover has left a new chief, a new city manager, and other new senior leaders with limited public-

safety experience, which complicates how staffing arguments are made and received. This vantage is central to how the findings should be sequenced for the council presentation, leading with efficiency before sufficiency, and it is the reception context within which the structural findings in A3, A4, and A5 will be acted upon.

Stakeholder coverage: City council; corroborated by city management and several civilian functions on the perception-versus-data question.

Strength: Strong

Anticipated quantitative cross-reference: Comparative agency structure and staffing tables; span-of-control benchmarking. Directly shapes the council-facing presentation strategy and the sequencing of the recommendation.

Scope-of-work alignment: Comparative analysis; supervisory span of control and management layers; staffing modeling.

B5. Positive culture, equipment, and benefits, with a coverage tension

Sub-themes: *strong family and camaraderie culture; excellent equipment and* a well-funded training budget; training dollars available but training time hard to protect; *strong retirement and benefits; work-life balance valued but double-edged for coverage; take-home-car radius limiting where officers can live*

Personnel across the sworn ranks consistently named the same positives: a strong family and camaraderie culture in a small agency, excellent equipment, , a well-funded training budget, and a strong retirement and benefits package. One clarification is needed so the training finding is not misread. When personnel praised training, they were praising the money: the department rarely turns down a request to attend a course, and the equipment officers train with is described as better than what most agencies provide. That is a different question from whether officers can actually get to the training. Because patrol must keep a required number of officers on the road at all times, an officer scheduled for training is often held back or called away to fill a shift, and sessions are sometimes canceled when the instructors themselves are needed elsewhere. So the same department can have a generous training budget and, at the same time, individual employees who have gone years without certain refresher training. The budget is the strength; the staffing level is what limits its use. The staffing side of this is addressed in findings A1 and A5. Work-life balance was valued but described as double-edged, since the same protections that retain people also constrain coverage. A recurring concrete item was the take-home-vehicle radius, which combines with local housing costs to push most officers to live outside the city and which personnel tied to recruiting and response.

Stakeholder coverage: Sworn command staff, patrol supervisors and officers, and the canine function.

Strength: Strong

Anticipated quantitative cross-reference: Residency distribution against the take-home-vehicle radius; retention against benefits benchmarks. Reinforces the recruiting and retention theme.

Scope-of-work alignment: Population and demand analysis; staffing modeling; comparative analysis.

Part C. Points of Divergence

The items in this part are genuine divergences, where two informed and credible vantages reach different conclusions. They are presented as paired perspectives rather than resolved here, because each is best adjudicated by the quantitative analysis. These are the points most likely to need careful handling in the final report.

C1. Investigative caseload, where a raw annual case count and the active-caseload-and-complexity picture point in different directions

Sub-themes: *a preliminary raw annual cases-per-detective figure suggesting capacity; active caseloads several times that figure; case complexity in fraud and cryptocurrency; a documented inability to retain detectives*

One measure, a preliminary raw count of investigative figures, cited roughly two hundred thirty cases across about seven detectives. Read on its own, that annual count implies a relatively low caseload per detective and supports a preliminary reading that the unit may carry more detectives than the numbers justify.

Three other lines of evidence point the other way. The detectives described active caseloads in the range of thirty to forty-five cases per detective at a single point in time, with state-attorney follow-ups pushing some higher, an evidence function holding several thousand items, and a recently departed senior detective who had carried fifty to sixty cases; they named ten to fifteen as a healthy active caseload and noted that no detective has remained in the role beyond about five years in the past decade because of the load.The retention pattern is strong corroboration that the overload is real rather than perceived. The quantitative analysis adds a third line: case-labor data in hand shows that the fraud and cryptocurrency cases that now dominate the caseload are time and labor intensive, so a raw case count understates the true workload.

Framed this way, the divergence is not an even split between perception and data. It is a raw annual count on one side and, on the other, the active-caseload-and-complexity picture supported by the detective testimony, the retention pattern, and the quantitative case-labor data, all converging. The raw count is the apparent outlier and should be read in light of how much time a fraud or cryptocurrency case actually consumes. The integration of the case-count and case-labor measures is in progress are explored in Chapter Three, Quantitative Analysis, and that reconciliation should precede any conclusion about detective staffing.

Stakeholder coverage: Quantitative and methodological vantage on the raw-count side; detectives, investigative command, the investigative aide function, and the quantitative case-labor data on the other.

Strength: Strong

Anticipated quantitative cross-reference: Reconcile the raw annual case count with point-in-time active caseload and with the case-labor data already collected; compute clearance and asset-recovery rates. Reconciliation in progress on the quantitative side. Resolving it is a prerequisite for any investigations staffing recommendation.

Scope-of-work alignment: Deployment and workload analysis; staffing modeling.

C2. Perceived busyness versus measured workload

Sub-themes: *personnel describing themselves as overwhelmed; preliminary indicators of available time and adequate response times; the risk of resolving this in either direction prematurely*

A central tension running through the engagement is the gap between how busy personnel feel and what preliminary workload indicators suggest. One vantage pointed to examples in which average calls per shift left meaningful unencumbered time and to response times that have been adequate, cautioning against equating perceived busyness with measured demand.

The opposing vantage is the consistent and detailed testimony, captured throughout Part A, of reactive posture, lost proactive capacity, and acute sensitivity to the loss of one or two officers. The reconciliation is unlikely to be that one side is simply wrong. Encumbered time, the unpredictability of demand, the multi-hour cost of a single arrest, and collateral duties that do not appear in calls-for-service counts all plausibly explain how genuine available time on paper coexists with a genuine sense of being stretched. This is the analytical hinge of the study and should be presented as a reconciliation rather than a verdict.

Stakeholder coverage: Quantitative and methodological vantage and some external observation on one side; sworn personnel at every level on the other; with city management and several civilian functions noting the perception-versus-data question directly.

Strength: Strong

Anticipated quantitative cross-reference: Segment CAD into calls for service versus self-initiated activity; compute encumbered, unencumbered, and administrative time against the availability factor; layer in arrest out-of-service time and collateral-duty manhours. The reconciliation framework, not a single number.

Scope-of-work alignment: Deployment and workload analysis; staffing modeling; population and demand analysis.

C3. Seasonal swing, where the season is widely felt but its effect on the emergency-services call-volume measure is modest

Sub-themes: *sworn personnel and city departments describing a pronounced seasonal increase; fire and emergency services acknowledging the seasonal population rise but reporting only a roughly ten percent swing in their own call volume*

Sworn personnel described a pronounced seasonal surge that effectively doubles the operating posture of the department, and city departments corroborated the seasonal population increase. Fire and emergency services did not dispute the season. They agreed the population is higher and the roads busier from roughly January through April, but reported that their own emergency-medical call volume no longer surges the way it once did and now swings only about ten percent. The two accounts reconcile if the seasonal load on police is driven more by events, traffic, and quality-of-life demand than by the medical-call volume that emergency services measures. The quantitative seasonal analysis should distinguish these demand types rather than treating seasonal load as a single curve.

Stakeholder coverage: Sworn personnel and city departments describing a strong seasonal increase; fire and emergency services acknowledging the season but measuring only a modest call-volume swing.

Strength: Tentative

Anticipated quantitative cross-reference: Decompose seasonal demand by call type from CAD; separate event and traffic load from medical-call load. Confirms whether the surge is real for police-specific demand even where the emergency-medical measure is modest.

Scope-of-work alignment: Seasonal and event fluctuation analysis; deployment and workload analysis.

C4. The canine unit, where command utilization assessment is the minority view

Sub-themes: *command describing low utilization and limited return; the special operations unit, which houses the canine function, describing a degraded program and asking for expansion; two elected officials favoring at least a service or community-facing dog; building searches handled by mutual aid*

Command described the canine unit as showing low utilization and a limited return on investment, noting that usage data does not justify the training and coverage cost and that the single remaining dog currently takes patrol calls. Command indicated it may carry no canine for a period rather than fund a replacement without a clear use case.

Most other vantages ran the other way. The special operations unit, which houses the canine function, described a program that has been allowed to degrade, with a single single-purpose dog that cannot perform apprehension or building searches, training time compromised by staffing, and kennel-care time not consistently honored. It argued for expansion to multiple dual-purpose dogs, including a passive tracking dog for missing-person and elderly cases and an explosives-detection dog for the heavy special-event load, and it attributed the falling drug-arrest statistics to

a stat-driven mentality rather than to the dog being unproductive. Two council members expressed disappointment at the program being wound down and argued for retaining at least a service or community-facing dog, noting that the fire department was given a working dog and questioning why the police department would not warrant the same. Building searches and apprehension are currently handled through mutual aid from the county and a neighboring agency.

So this is not an evenly split divergence. The utilization-and-cost assessment from command is the minority position, set against the special operations unit and two council members who see value the raw usage data does not capture. The unresolved question is one of cause and effect: whether low utilization justifies winding the unit down, or whether a degraded single-purpose unit produces the low utilization. The quantitative usage data should be read alongside the mutual-aid reliance it creates and the community-facing value the other vantages describe.

Stakeholder coverage: Sworn command on one side; the special operations unit, which includes the canine function, and two council members on the other; patrol separately noted mutual-aid reliance for building searches.

Strength: Tentative

Anticipated quantitative cross-reference: Canine deployment and usage data; frequency and response time of mutual-aid requests for building searches and apprehension. Read utilization against the coverage gap it creates and the community-facing value described.

Scope-of-work alignment: Deployment and workload analysis; organizational structure review.

Chapter Three: Quantitative Analyses

Purpose

This chapter organizes the findings from the quantitative data analysis. The analyses here are drawn from the Department's records across a five-year window, principally the CAD data from 2020 through 2024, together with records-management report data, the court-appearance log, off-duty detail records, a ten-year separation history, the leave and training files, supplemented by primary-source figures collected from comparable agencies, and supplementary materials provided by VPD.

Note, this chapter is organized as a sequence of analyses that move from demand to deployment to staffing. The early analyses establish the composition and timing of workload, response-time performance, and the spatial concentration of demand. Next, the analyses convert that workload into a staffing requirement using the *Wilson and Weiss model*, examine staff efficiency and productive hours, and assess the investigations, specialty, and traffic functions. The analyses also benchmark the Department against comparable agencies and project demand forward against the city's documented growth.

Peer-Agency Comparison

To place the Department's staffing in context, the study surveyed eight comparable Florida municipal agencies and compared them against Venice on population, sworn strength, staffing ratios, minimum staffing, civilian support, and entry pay. Initially, the peer-group was targeted as Southwest Florida agencies, but after focus group and interviews it was clear that many agencies normally compared with Venice from Southwest Florida have excessively higher home values (such as Golden Cities) or have been impacted significantly with severe hurricanes in recent years, we assessed Florida agencies on average home value, season population, and tourism impacts on population and services. The following peers were selected: Cocoa Beach, Fernandina Beach, New Smyrna Beach, Ormond Beach, Punta Gorda, St. Augustine, Stuart, and Vero Beach. Each agency's figures were supplied directly by its command staff during May 2026, which makes this a current, primary-source comparison rather than an estimate drawn from secondary databases. See *Appendix B* for a full overview of comparison data.

Per-capita comparison carries an important caveat, stated throughout this report and the staff relief factor proposed by Wilson and Weiss: officers-per-thousand ratios are not a sound basis for setting staffing, because they ignore workload, call mix, geography, and service expectations. The comparison below is offered for context because it is the comparison policymakers most often reach for, and not as a staffing prescription. The workload-based analysis later in this chapter remains the defensible basis for sizing the force and making future workforce decisions.

Table 2

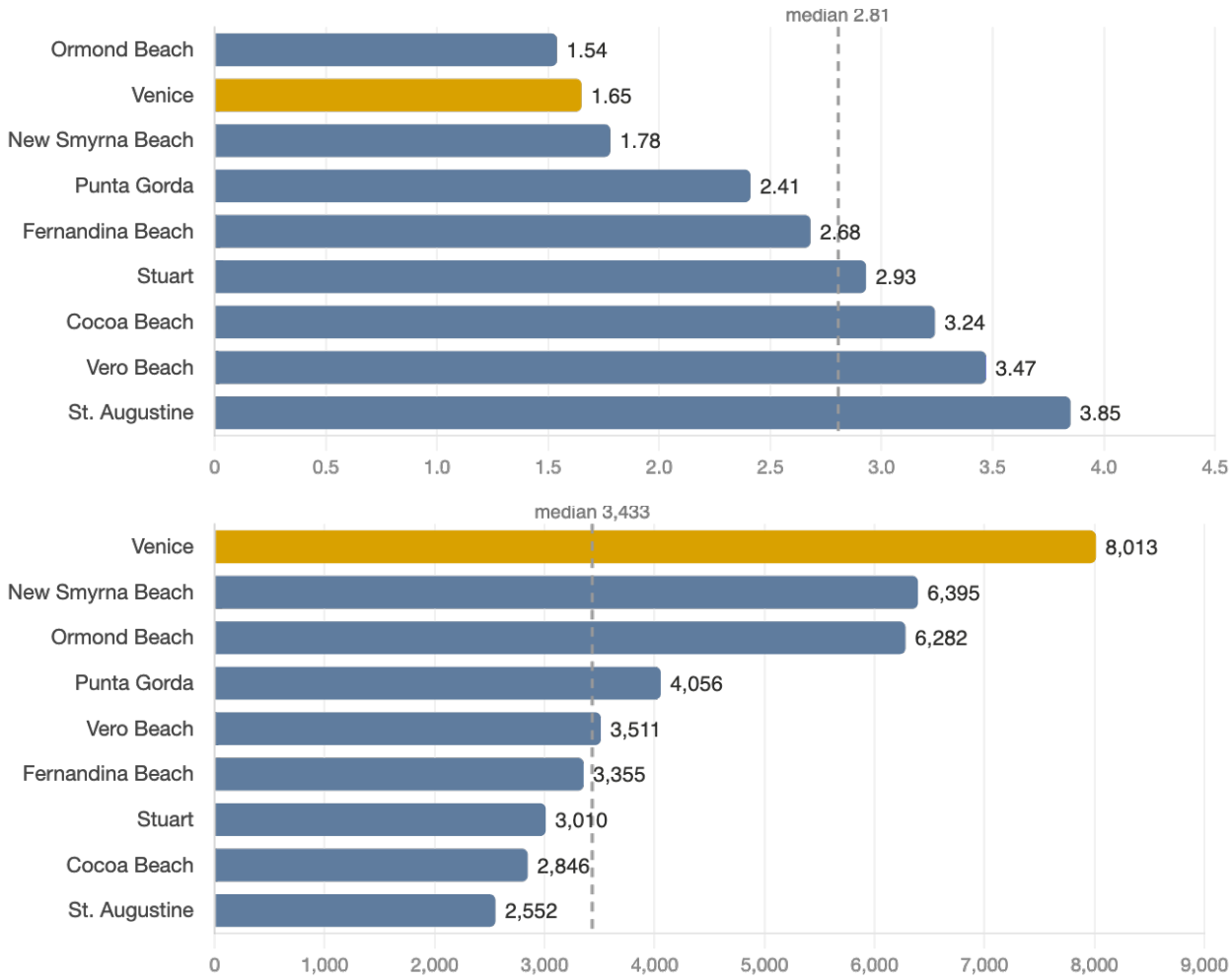
Comparative Peer-agency comparison, primary-source figures collected May 2026.

Agency	Resident Population	Sworn (on-board)	Officers / 1,000	Min on Duty	Entry Pay	Land Area	Minimum Staffing
Venice	32,053	53	1.65	4	$70,000	16.13	3
Cocoa Beach	11,386	37	3.24	4	$47,986	4.66	3
Fernandina Beach	13,420	36	2.68	4	$61,000	11.83	4
New Smyrna Beach	31,974	57	1.78	5	$57,491	37.84	6
Ormond Beach	43,976	68	1.54	7	$54,163	34.78	4
Punta Gorda	20,278	49	2.41	5	$64,500	15.49	5
St. Augustine	15,315	59	3.85	6	$64,323	9.52	5
Stuart	18,058	53	2.93	6	$65,395	7.05	4
Vero Beach	17,556	61	3.47	5	$58,976	11.50	3

On the most common benchmark, Venice fields about 1.65 officers per 1,000 non-seasonal residents, the second lowest of the nine agencies, ahead of only Ormond Beach (1.61), and well below the peer mean of about 2.35 and the peer median of 2.81. Only New Smyrna Beach, at a similar population, sits close to Venice. The higher-ratio agencies tend to be the smaller beach cities (Cocoa Beach, St. Augustine, Vero Beach), where a large daytime and tourist population relative to a small resident base pushes the per-resident ratio up. Even allowing for that, Venice's position is clear in that it is measured against residents, and it is among the most thinly staffed in the group. Reaching the peer median of 2.79 would imply roughly 89 sworn officers.

Figure 1

Officers per 1,000 residents, on-board and Residents per on Duty Officer (Minimum Staffing)

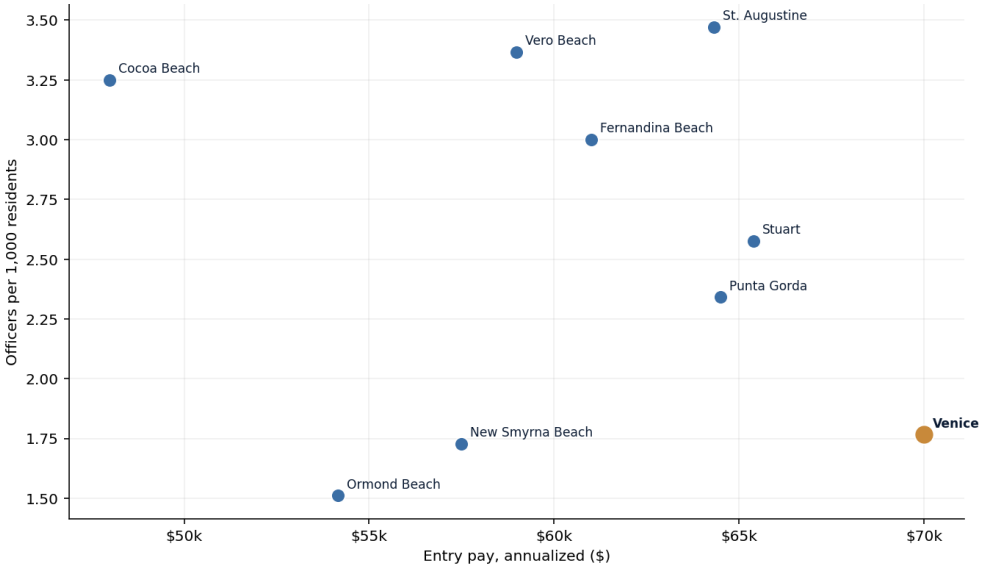


Interestingly, Venice pays the highest entry salary of any agency in the group, about $70,000 against a peer mean near $59,000, yet fields nearly the fewest officers per capita and the lowest on-duty presence of any comparator. In Figure 2 it sits by itself in the lower-right corner, separated from every peer -- i.e., lowest in officers per 1,000 residents, and highest in residents carried by each on-duty officer at roughly 8,013, more than double the peer median of 3,433. New Smyrna Beach, a city of near-identical population, fields five officers on duty to Venice's four.

Further, the Department keeps its authorized positions filled, as discussed earlier. The constraint is therefore not the ability to attract and retain officers at the current size; it is the authorized size itself. Venice is fully staffed to a lean establishment. The lever available to the city is not primarily recruitment or pay, both of which are already strong, but the number of authorized positions, and with it the minimum number of officers the Department can place on the street at any one time.

Figure 2

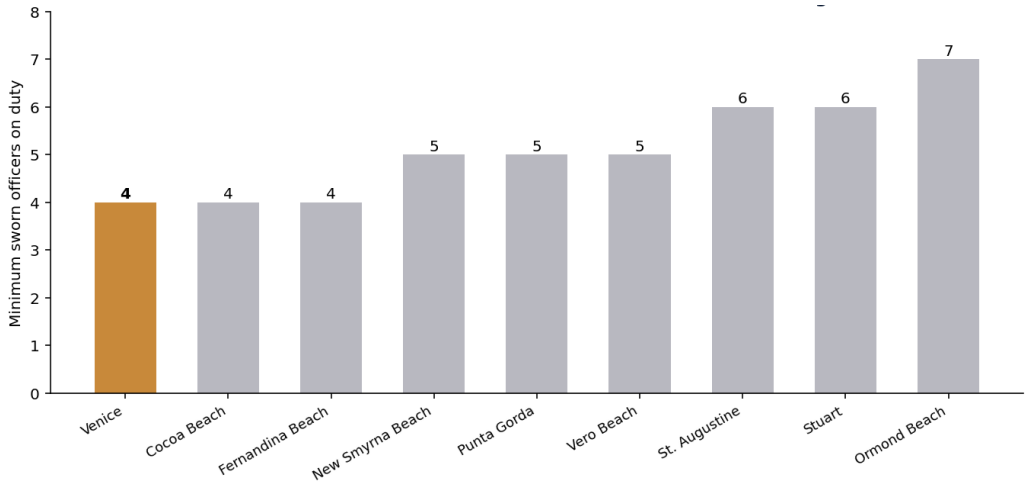
Entry pay against officers per 1,000 residents.



The minimum-staffing comparison reinforces the point and connects directly to the staffing model later in this chapter. Venice maintains a minimum of four sworn officers on duty (three officers plus a supervisor), which is tied with Cocoa Beach and Fernandina Beach for the lowest absolute minimum in the group, and the lowest of all nine as a share of its own force, at about 8 percent. Agencies of comparable or larger population maintain higher floors, given that New Smyrna Beach and Punta Gorda run five, Stuart and St. Augustine six, and Ormond Beach seven. Venice's minimum of four is the floor that the JSG model proposes to raise: to a 4+1 on each shift with a 4 officer mid-shift bridging the peak. In addition, the peer data shows that doing so would bring Venice from the bottom of the group to the middle, in line with similarly sized coastal agencies.

Figure 3

Minimum Staffing on Duty



However, Venice's functional population swells with seasonal residents and visitors. Case in point, command staff put the seasonal peak near 40,000, against a resident base of 30,000, so the resident-

population denominator understates the true policing load during the winter season. Most peers report a similar seasonal uplift, so the relative comparison still holds, but it means Venice's already-lean per-resident ratio overstates how well-staffed the Department is at peak season. Measured against the functional population that actually generates calls, Venice is leaner still. This is the same effect as discussed later in this chapter.

Ultimately Venice is a well-compensated comparable to the comparable agencies[3] and in similar range with other municipal agencies in Sarasota County. Fully staffed department operating at a deliberately lean authorized strength, but it is near the bottom of its peer group on officers per resident and on minimum staffing, while at the top on pay and retention. The implication is that the binding constraint is the authorized headcount, and that Venice has more room than its peers to expand without straining recruitment, because it is not fighting a hiring problem. The peer comparison does not, however, on its own, set the right number. It does independently corroborate the proposed direction this chapter later posits.

Operational Workload

Every call that comes into dispatch is given a priority code that distinguishes urgency. Venice's calls run through the Sarasota County dispatch system, which uses a scale from 1 to 6. Priority 1 is the most serious -- true emergencies happening right now, such as an active shooter, a stabbing, a drowning, or an officer urgently calling for help, all of which send more than one unit at once. Priority 2 covers calls that are still urgent but not life-threatening, such as a crime that just occurred or an urgent service request. Priorities 3 through 6 cover everything more routine or administrative. Based on this assumption, the following analyses allowed for an evaluation, over the five years studied, of whether the calls coming into Venice impacted workload and resourcing.

Across the five years, the most urgent calls (Priority 1) numbered 36,907 and stayed between thirty-four and thirty-eight percent of all public calls in every single year. Priority 2 calls numbered 60,083 and remained stable at between fifty-six and sixty percent. Routine Priority 3 calls were far fewer, about 800 a year, and Priorities 4 and 6 together made up less than two percent. Overall, the two most urgent categories accounted for ninety-two percent of all public calls, year after year.

In addition, the data showed that the Department got faster at answering its Priority 2 calls over this period (discussed below). A natural objection would be that the calls simply got easier, given that response times improved only because the work became lighter. However, analysis of the priority data contradicts that explanation. Because the difficulty of incoming calls did not change, the faster response times represent an improvement in performance. However, there was a complication in the priority data that, when ignored, distorted the picture. The priority codes were

[3] Note, these analyses did not examine regional differences and therefore cannot establish whether Venice's compensation is competitive relative to agencies beyond those included in this study.

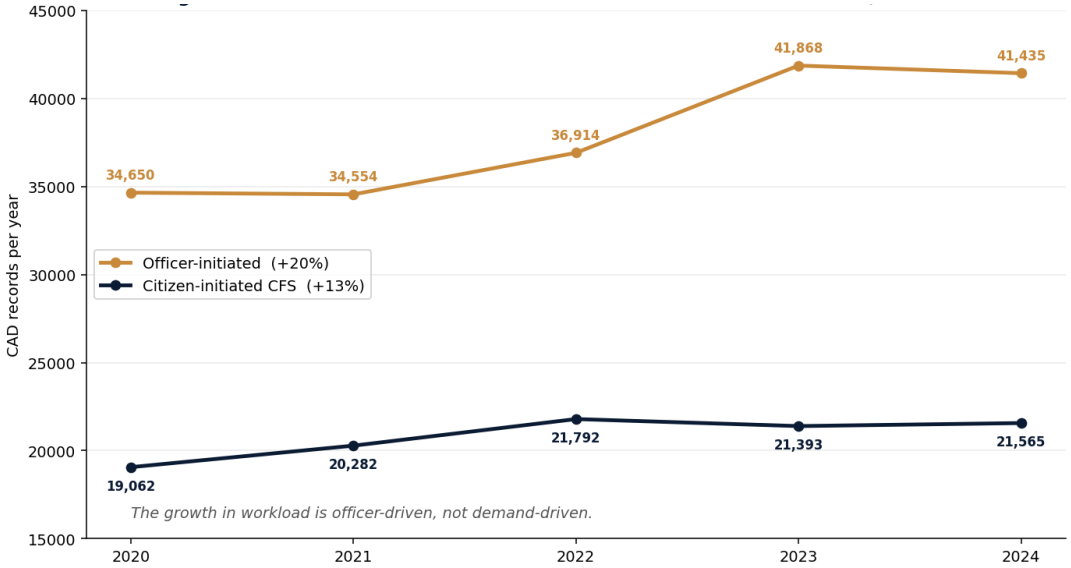
not only attached to calls from the public; they were also attached to the routine activity officers generated themselves. Most of that self-generated activity carried administrative codes (e.g., 46,406 records were marked Priority 4 and 60,748 were marked Priority 6). But a large number of officer-generated records (e.g., 31,985) were marked Priority 1, and almost all of them traffic stops. The dispatch system assigned every traffic stop the top priority, where a routine stop appeared to turn to a priority call. A further 34,409 officer records were marked Priority 2.

In short, when you add up all the Priority 1 records without separating them, what appears to happen is that emergencies reported by the public together with routine traffic stops (i.e., two completely different things wearing the same label) resulted in a count that would suggest far more emergencies than actually occurred. To avoid this, every table in this report that breaks calls down by priority keeps public calls and officer-generated activity separate.

Overall, the Department's CAD-recorded workload grew seventeen percent over a five-year (2020-2024) window, but that growth was almost entirely officer-initiated rather than a product of rising community demand. Citizen calls for service rose moderately, by roughly thirteen percent, in approximate step with population. Officer-initiated activity rose faster, by twenty percent, and the ratio of officer-initiated activity to each citizen call climbed from 1.70 in the 2021–22 period to 1.92 in 2023–24. Response-time performance improved over the same window, with median response on Priority 2 calls falling from 6.2 to 4.9 minutes, a twenty-one percent reduction, and the ninetieth-percentile time falling from 21.0 to 17.8 minutes. However, Priority 1 response remained stable at approximately 4.6 minutes. VPD was therefore doing more self-directed work and answering its urgent calls more quickly at the same time, a pattern that at first appears to suggest that VPD are not overwhelmed by demand. Instead, there appears to be a focus toward deploying resources on the basis of community level, proactive policing.

To fully understand VPD resourcing, the subsequent analyses drew on the full CAD data provided by the Department, which consisted of 293,515 unit-dispatch records spanning 227,152 unique events. Records were classified into two categories, *citizen-initiated calls for service* and *officer-initiated activity*. Note, citizen call volume reflected community demand, which the agency could not decline, while officer-initiated activity reflected deployment strategy and patrol-bandwidth choices, which the agency could aim, expand, or redirect. Figure 4, demonstrates the change in CAD growth.

Figure 4.
CAD volume growth, officer-initiated versus citizen-initiated, 2020–2024



As can be seen by the distance between the two trend lines, VPD CAD data suggests a focus toward community level policing. In addition, as can be seen in both Figure 1 and Table 1 citizen-initiated calls for service rose from 19,062 records in 2020 to 21,565 in 2024, an increase of thirteen percent across the five years, broadly consistent with the city's population growth over the same period. Officer-initiated activity rose from 34,650 to 41,435 records, an increase of twenty percent. The ratio of officer-initiated activity to each citizen call rose from 1.70 in 2021 to 1.92 in 2024, peaking at 1.96 in 2023, which indicated that the Department was generating more proactive activity per unit of community demand at the end of the window than at its start.

In addition, the improvement in response time accompanied rather than offset this growth. Median response on Priority 2 calls fell from 6.2 to 4.9 minutes, and the ninetieth-percentile measure fell from 21.0 to 17.8 minutes, while Priority 1 response remained stable at approximately 4.6 minutes. An agency expanding its self-initiated output while simultaneously reaching its urgent calls faster did not present the signature of one overwhelmed by demand. Table 1 reported the annual volumes underlying this trend. Two rows in particular were of particular importance. The share of total work represented by citizen calls decreased slightly across the window, from 35.5 percent to 34.2 percent, because officer-initiated activity grew faster than community demand, and the officer-initiated-per-call ratio rose by 5.5 percent over the same period.

Table 3

Total CAD data, including CFS and Officer-initiated calls.

Metric	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	5-yr Δ
Total unit-dispatches	53,712	54,836	58,706	63,261	63,000	+17%
Unique events	41,500	42,159	44,552	49,334	49,607	+20%

Metric	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	5-yr Δ
Citizen-initiated CFS rows	19,062	20,282	21,792	21,393	21,565	+13%
Officer-initiated rows	34,650	34,554	36,914	41,868	41,435	+20%
Unique CFS events	10,242	10,665	11,245	10,666	11,365	+11%
CFS share of total	35.5%	37.0%	37.1%	33.8%	34.2%	–1.3 pp
Officer-initiated per CFS	1.82	1.70	1.69	1.96	1.92	+5.5%

Note, however, that the CAD recorded every unit status change as well as every dispatched call, which produced a dataset in which status updates outnumbered actual citizen calls by nearly two to one. As such, results may change depending on how this data was classified. For transparency, the rule the study applied is set out below.

> ***Officer-initiated records.*** Officer-initiated records were identified as any event carrying a 10-code in the 10xx series, together with a small set of operationally officer-driven signal codes. The principal 10-code series comprised 1006 BUSY, 1006S BUSY-SECURITY CHECK, 1006T BUSY-TRAFFIC DETAIL, 1006F BUSY-FIELD INTERVIEW, 1006R BUSY-RADAR, 1050 VEHICLE STOP, 1087 ON PORTABLE RADIO, 1010 BREAK, 1053 COMING BY STATION, 1076 ONVIEW AVAILABLE, and 1058 OUT OF SERVICE. A further set of 10-codes was included on the same basis: 1042, 1057, 1060, 1077, 1085, 1086, 1088, 1089, 100, 1031, 1074, and 1075. The operationally officer-driven codes added to this category were 15 SPECIAL DETAIL, 87 PATROL REQUEST, 75 SURVEILLANCE/STAKEOUT, and 67TRF TRAFFIC CONTROL.
>
> ***Citizen-initiated calls for service.*** Every record that did not meet the officer-initiated definition was treated as a citizen-initiated call. This category comprised the numeric signals, such as 1, 2, 4, 22, 49, and 13P, together with the dual-response codes 4BC, 13D, 26, 32A, 33, 33AS, 34, 45, 59, 67Lock, and 90HELP.
>
> ***PATROL REQUEST.*** The PATROL REQUEST category was retained as citizen-initiated calls, as this code could plausibly fall on either side. As such, this choice marginally understated the officer-initiated share. A change in this categorization would have pushed the officer-initiated share above seventy percent.

Within each origin category, a small number of CAD codes accounted for the bulk of the records. The composition of each category is documented below.

> ***Officer-initiated.*** Officer-initiated records totaled 189,021 across the five-year period, or sixty-four percent of all CAD activity. The largest categories were the following. Formal premise checks, recorded as BUSY-SECURITY CHECK (1006S), accounted for 54,876 records and represented checks at commercial properties and identified vacation-watch addresses; this was the single largest officer-initiated category and the principal driver of

the growth in officer-initiated activity over the study period. Vehicle stops (1050) accounted for 31,987 records of traffic enforcement activity, and the geographic distribution of those stops correlated with the geographic distribution of crashes at r = 0.91. This is discussed later in the chapter. The generic officer status BUSY (1006) accounted for 31,552 records, and the out-of-car status ON PORTABLE RADIO (1087) accounted for 28,964 records.

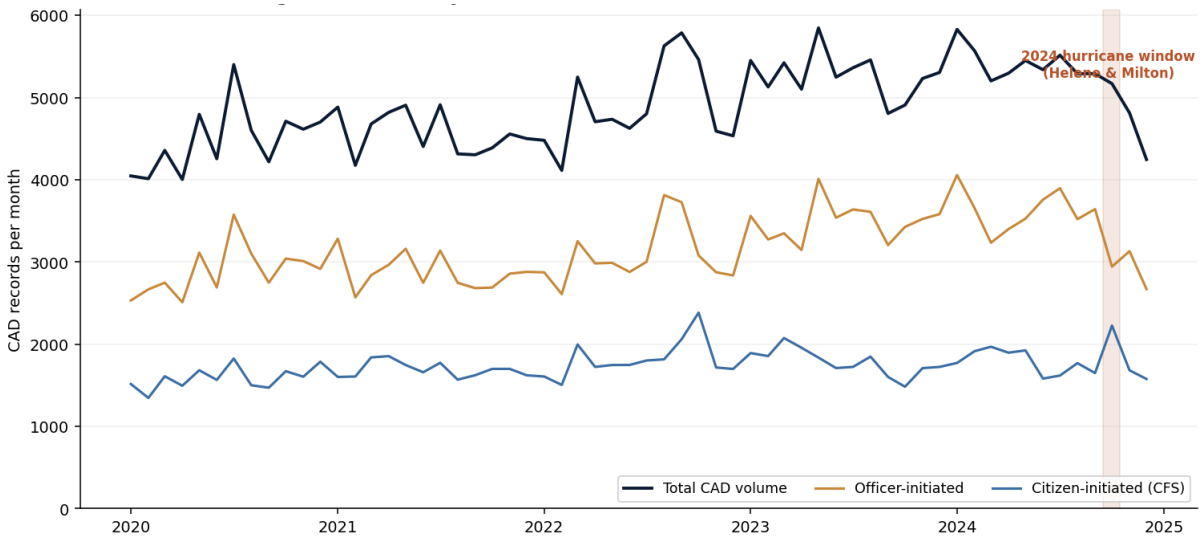
Citizen-initiated calls for service. Citizen-initiated calls for service totaled 104,094 records across 53,183 unique events. The largest categories were the following. PATROL REQUEST (e.g., directed patrol), accounted for 9,651 records and was retained under citizen-initiated in accordance with the conservative classification rule described above. Suspicious-person calls accounted for 9,073 records. Alarm calls accounted for 8,321 records and were the principal driver of call associated with Island Village Montessori. Assist-other-agency calls accounted for 7,853 records.

As noted above, security checks of buildings and properties (i.e., the BUSY-SECURITY CHECK code) accounted for 54,876 records and were the single largest reason officer-initiated activity grew over this period. The catch is that this kind of work leaves only a brief status note in the dispatch system, not a written report. As a result, any measure of productivity that counts only written reports will miss a large and growing share of what officers are actually doing. As such, two practical conclusions follow.

1. First, the Department's monthly performance briefings should show citizen calls and officer-initiated activity as two separate numbers rather than a single combined "*calls*" total. Because the two are growing at different rates, a combined figure gives a misleading account of where the workload, and the resourcing need, actually sits.
2. Second, when judging how productive patrol officers are, the Department should count their self-initiated activity (such as security checks and traffic stops) alongside the reports they write, not reports alone. Counting both ensures that the work that shows up in the dispatch system but never becomes a written report is properly credited to the officers doing it.

Figure 5.

Monthly CAD volume, 2020–2024, with the September–October 2024 hurricane window shaded.



The monthly CAD series also allowed a direct test of the seasonal signature of the population-based projections. Venice, like much of coastal Florida, has a large seasonal population, including part-time residents and visitors (often called *snowbirds*) arrive in the cooler winter months and leave for the summer. A common assumption is that this winter influx drives up demand for police service, and the population-based forecasts elsewhere in this study build in a seasonal "bump" on that basis. The monthly data offered a way to check whether that bump actually appears in the Department's own call records. It largely did not. Looking only at calls that came from the public (rather than activity officers generated themselves), the winter months were only slightly busier than the summer low point. March was the single busiest month for community calls, but only by about fifteen percent over the quietest month. And when all CAD activity was counted together, the year was essentially flat from month to month, because the large volume of officer-initiated work did not follow a seasonal pattern at all. The one apparent spike, in October 2024, was caused by Hurricane Milton rather than by seasonal demand; every other month fell within the normal range.

The practical takeaway is that the seasonal increase assumed in the forecasts should be treated as an open question and not an established fact. Before it is built into staffing decisions, it should be tested directly against a focused look at the peak winter season. That dedicated snowbird-season analysis is taken up later in the report.

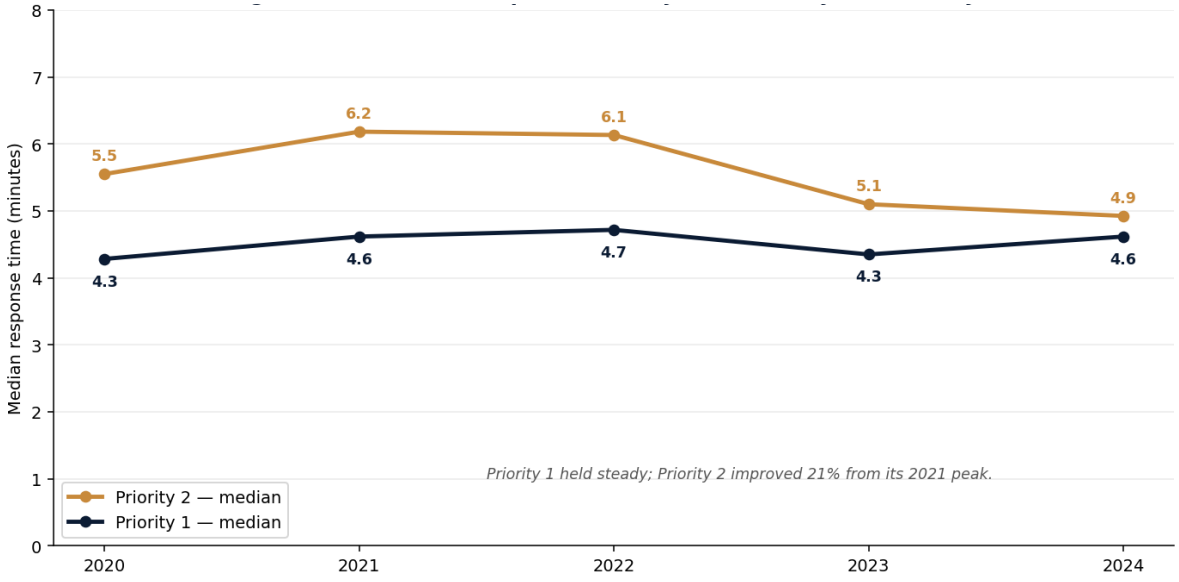
Response Time Performance

Response time was the elapsed time from call creation in CAD to the arrival of the first unit on scene. This was used because callers experience is directly associated to response time and because it is the principal indicator of patrol deployment effectiveness. This section reports it across four dimensions: aggregate performance, beat-level variation, shift-level variation, and the weekday midday volume. To do this, response time was computed for citizen-initiated calls only, using the

first-arriving unit per event, as the interval between the Arrived and Create Datetime stamps. The 227,152 events in the source file reduce to 47,952 events with a valid arrival timestamp after filtering. Records with negative intervals or intervals greater than 720 minutes were excluded as data errors ($N = 6{,}942$). Priority 3 medians are recorded near zero because routine telephone reports were commonly stamped as arrived at the time of dispatch; this is noted where relevant and Priority 3 is not used as a performance indicator. The spatial response-time surface later discussed in the report applied a stricter 30-second floor to exclude at-station arrivals; the aggregate medians here use the 720-minute filter and therefore include some at-station arrivals in the lowest bins.

Figure 6

Median response time by year, Priority 1 and Priority 2. Source:



Calls are graded on an urgency scale; Priority 1 denotes in-progress emergencies and Priority 2 denotes urgent but non-life-threatening calls. Priority 1 median response held between 4.3 and 4.7 minutes across all five years, with no meaningful trend, and a ninetieth-percentile of 10.6 to 11.4 minutes. This is the expected result for the urgent tier, which should not vary year to year. The Department absorbed a seventeen percent increase in total call volume over the period without degradation in Priority 1 response.

Priority 2 median response fell from 6.2 minutes in 2021 to 4.9 minutes in 2024, a twenty-one percent reduction, and the ninetieth percentile fell from 21.0 to 17.8 minutes. Three properties distinguish this finding, as citizen call volume was flat over the period, so the improvement was not demand-driven; the priority mix of incoming calls was also stable, with Priority 1 and 2 together accounting for ninety-two percent of citizen calls in every year, so it is not the product of

an easier caseload; and officer-initiated activity grew twenty percent over the same period, consistent with a deployment effect in which more widely distributed units are closer, on average, to dispatched calls.

When examining response across zones, performance differed substantially and consistently across the seven zones. Table 2 ranks them on the ninetieth-percentile emergency arrival time.

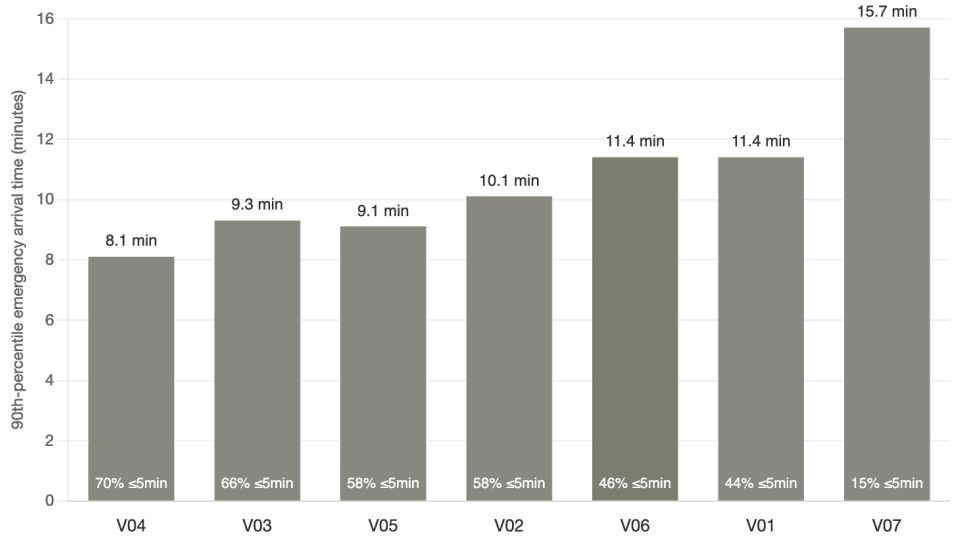
Table 4

Emergency (Priority 1) response time by patrol beat, 2020–2024.

Beat	Emergency calls (N)	Median arrival	90th-pctl arrival	% within 5 min	% within 8 min	Rank
V04	6,457	3 min 11 sec	8 min 17 sec	70.9%	89.2%	1st
V03	4,610	3 min 32 sec	9 min 27 sec	66.2%	85.3%	2nd
V05	5,452	3 min 53 sec	8 min 46 sec	63.9%	87.1%	3rd
V06	3,427	4 min 44 sec	10 min 59 sec	52.9%	78.1%	4th
V01	79	5 min 28 sec	12 min 38 sec	45.6%	69.6%	5th
V02	4,871	4 min 09 sec	10 min 10 sec	59.9%	81.9%	6th
V07	2,904	8 min 41 sec	14 min 56 sec	21.0%	43.8%	7th

Figure 7

Zone ranked by 90th-percentile emergency arrival time; share answered within five minutes shown at base of each bar.



Zone V04, the US 41 corridor, was the best performer, and appeared to do so while handling the highest emergency call volume. Zone V07, on the eastern and northern periphery, was the worst:

its median was more than 2.7 times V04's, and 21.0 percent of its emergency calls are answered within five minutes against 70.9 percent on V04. Zone V01 is principally the municipal airport and marine area, with only 79 emergency calls over five years; its estimate is reported for completeness and is too thin for meaningful analysis. A Kruskal-Wallis test across the zones returns $p < 0.001$, and pairwise tests confirm the V04–V07 difference in every year of the study. In practical terms, this means the response-time differences between beats are too large and consistent to be the product of chance variation in which calls happened to come in. As such, they reflect a genuine, stable difference in performance across the zones.

However, the CAD data establishes the gap but cannot, on its own, identify its cause. Four explanations are plausible and not mutually exclusive:

1. ***Zone size relative to coverage.*** V07's physical extent is large relative to the units routinely assigned to it, raising structural travel time from unit to call.
2. ***Multi-unit draw from adjacent zones.*** Roughly nineteen percent of all calls draw two or more officers; if V07 units are routinely pulled into adjacent-zone events, V07's effective single-unit coverage falls.
3. ***Dispatch assignment practice.*** If dispatch assigns the nearest available unit rather than the zone-assigned unit, the distribution of closest-available units may systematically disfavor V07.
4. ***Jurisdictional geography.*** Parts of V07 abut Sarasota County Sheriff's Office jurisdiction; coverage ambiguity at the boundary may introduce assignment or mutual-aid delay not labelled as such in CAD.

Identifying which factor or combination is operative requires dispatch-assignment records, unit-location history, and structured interviews, beyond a CAD-only review.

Additional analyses divided a 24-hour clock into three equal periods: day (06:00–14:00), evening (14:00–22:00), and night (22:00–06:00). These periods do not match VPD's actual shift schedule; however, they were used because dividing the day evenly allowed a more fine-grained comparison of response performance across the daytime, evening, and overnight hours than the operational roster would. On that basis, the CAD data showed the following. Night recorded the fastest emergency response. This reflects lower concurrent call volume and lighter traffic overnight rather than any difference in how officers respond. The evening period handled the largest share of dispatched workload -- approximately thirty-seven percent -- and at the same time produced the widest spread in its ninetieth-percentile emergency arrival times, meaning its slowest calls ran considerably longer than those in the other periods. That combination of the highest volume and a long upper tail points to a demand-capacity imbalance. In other words, evening coverage was adequate for normal conditions but stretched during its busiest periods. This links directly to the

weekday midday pattern discussed below, because the end of the day period and the start of the evening period overlap with the peak in weekday demand.

Table 5

Response time by operational shift, 2020–2024.

Shift	Calls handled	Median (all)	Emergency median	Emergency 90th-pctl
Day (06:00–14:00)	31,813	3 min 40 sec	6 min 00 sec	11 min 46 sec
Evening (14:00–22:00)	35,362	4 min 06 sec	5 min 31 sec	10 min 51 sec
Night (22:00–06:00)	15,832	3 min 02 sec	4 min 37 sec	8 min 49 sec

To find where and when the Department was under the most strain, demand and response time were examined together for every combination of beat, day of week, and hour of day. The cells of interest are those that rank in the top quarter on both measures at once, i.e., the times and places that are simultaneously among the busiest and among the slowest to respond. Twelve such cells existed across the five-year dataset, and every one of them falls on a weekday between 11:00 and 14:00. The worst are shown in Table X below.

Table 6

Weekday slots with highest concurrent demand and slowest response.

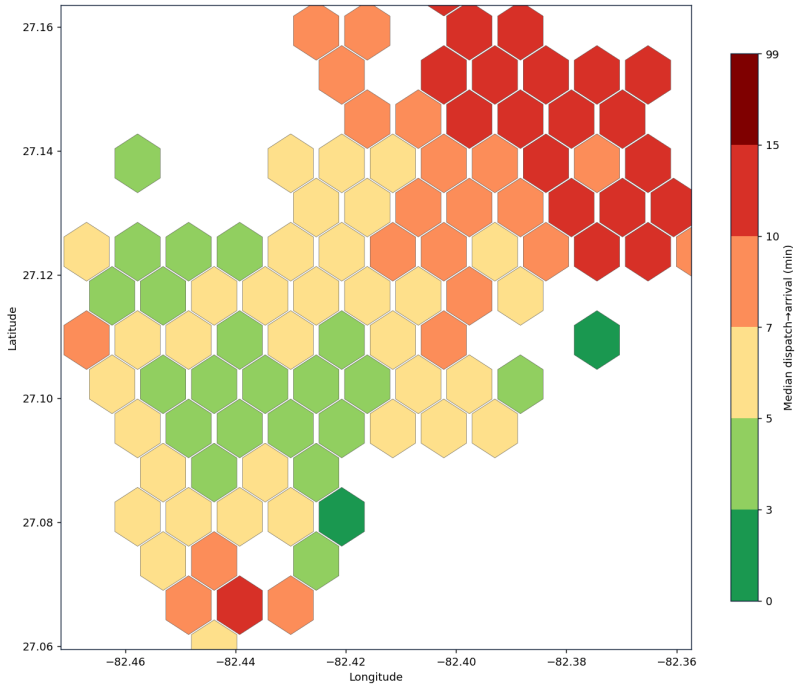
Beat	Hour	Annual avg P1 calls	90th-pctl arrival	Interpretation
V02	11:00	254	12 min 05 sec	Late-morning surge; high demand, thin coverage.
V02	12:00	261	14 min 03 sec	Worst single cell in the five-year dataset.
V02	18:00	289	12 min 40 sec	Evening secondary peak compounding the pattern.
V05	13:00	270	11 min 53 sec	Afternoon peak; consistent across all five years.

Four features mark this as a structural issue rather than something that is random. In other words, the cells cluster in the central and southern zones with the highest midday activity (V02, V05); they cluster in a three-hour weekday window; they recur in every year of the dataset; and they coincide with the thinnest point in the current shift structure, well before night shift assumes full responsibility at 7pm. The immediate remedy is a scheduling adjustment to include a staggered

start, which brings an additional shift on at 11:00 to create an overlap between the Day and Night shifts.

Response time also followed a clear center-to-periphery gradient. In particular, the downtown core and the central corridor are routinely under five minutes; times lengthen toward the northern and eastern edges, with the V07 area slowest. This report develops this at finer level later and establishes that the V07 gap is distributed across the whole of the zones footprint rather than concentrated at a single location, which is why a point-location remedy such as a single relocated post would be less effective than a change in the periphery's overall coverage pattern. See Figure 8 below for an overview of this disparity.

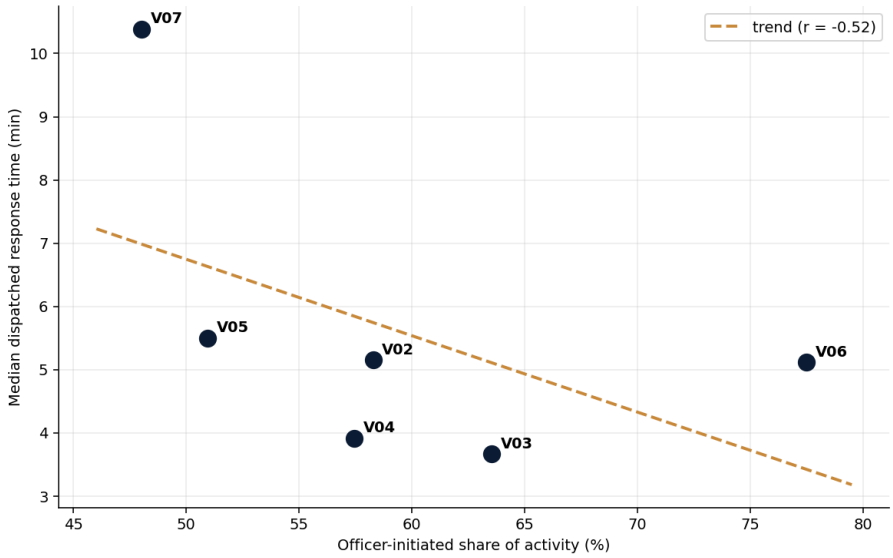
Figure 8
Median priority-call response time by hex cell. Green under 5 minutes, red over 10.



A common assumption holds that higher officer-initiated activity reduces availability for dispatched response. However, the Venice data did not support that assumption. Across zones, the correlation between officer-initiated share and median dispatched response time was negative. In other words, zones with more self-initiated activity tended to respond faster and the relationship was stronger within individual zones over the course of the day. The most plausible mechanism that explains this was geographic. In this regard, officers actively on patrol are more widely distributed across their zone than officers in fixed locations, so a unit is more often already near an incoming call. Zone V02 illustrates the point over time, with its officer-initiated share rising

from roughly half its activity in 2020 to nearly two-thirds in 2024 while response performance remained stable

Figure 9.
Officer-initiated share versus median dispatched response time, by beat.



The operational implication is that reducing officer-initiated activity to free units for dispatched response would likely produce slower, not faster, response. This is consistent with the wider research on preventive patrol and is not specific to Venice. As such, three conclusions follow from the response-time analysis:

1. The current deployment is approximately sized for current response workload but offers little margin for growth. Continued volume growth at the historical rate will pressure response times absent compensating change in deployment, scheduling, or capacity.
2. The V07 gap is the most operationally significant single finding. It has persisted across five full years and will not resolve without deliberate action.
3. The midday increase in response needs is a predictable factor and addressable in the short-term through scheduling. However, (1) this does not account for a growing population, and (2) it does suggest the need for additional staffing to maintain a proactive culture.

Geographic Distribution and Spatial Demand

This section examines where the Department's workload occurs and what the geographic distribution implies for deployment. Note, every figure is computed directly from the geocoded

CAD records, where geolocation data was available. Where a value differed from the figure stated in the source report, the computed value is presented as-is and the reason is reconciled at the end of this section; in no case was a figure adjusted to match. The main finding is that workload was not distributed evenly across the city. It concentrated in the south (i.e., the historic downtown and waterfront) with a secondary band along the US 41 corridor to the northeast. The eastern zone (V07) generated substantial new demand but based on the current data, it largely sits at the periphery of response, distant from where units are normally located, which is the proximate reason its response times are the slowest in the city. The operative staffing question is therefore less whether the Department has enough officers than whether they are positioned where demand actually occurs, and whether that positioning is keeping pace with the city's eastward growth.

Figure 10 presents all police activity over the five-year period as a heat map, in which brighter areas indicate a higher concentration of calls and officer activity. Two adjustments were applied to ensure the map accurately represents the underlying distribution. First, the brightness scale is weighted rather than proportional. In other words, a small number of locations in Venice generated considerably more activity than the rest of the city. Were brightness to increase in direct proportion to the raw count, those few high-volume locations would register at full intensity while everywhere else faded toward darkness, creating the false impression that the remainder of the city generates almost no activity. The weighted scale moderates this effect, so that meaningful differences among the more typical areas remain visible. However, the trade-off is that the busiest locations appear less dominant than their raw counts alone would imply; in return, the broader pattern across the city is preserved rather than obscured by a handful of extreme sites. Second, the police departments address is excluded. A substantial number of records are logged at that location (e.g., walk-in reports taken at the front desk and routine administrative entries), none of which reflect actual demand in the field. Retained, the department address would appear as the single highest intensity point on the map and would draw attention away from the areas where officers are genuinely deployed.

With these two adjustments, the pattern suggests that demand is consistent across the period. Notably, a single dense core over south Venice (the downtown and waterfront), a defined band of activity extending northeast along the US 41 corridor, and substantially lower activity across the northern and far-eastern portions of the city. This distribution carries a practical implication for deployment. Specifically, allocating officers evenly across the city's geography would place excessive coverage in the lower-activity north and insufficient coverage in the higher-activity south. The map provides the first indication that deployment should be weighted toward the south-and-corridor core rather than distributed uniformly across the city's land area.

Figure 10

Five-year CAD activity, log color scale, excluding the police department address (1575 E Venice Ave).

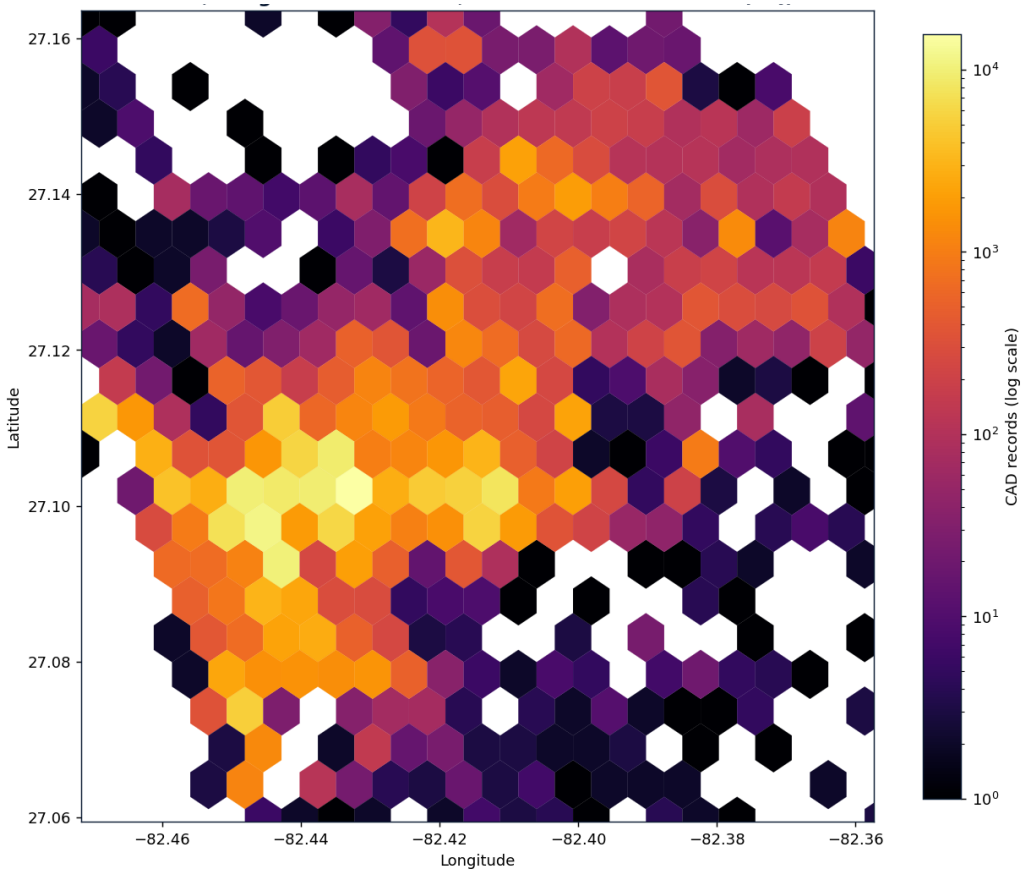
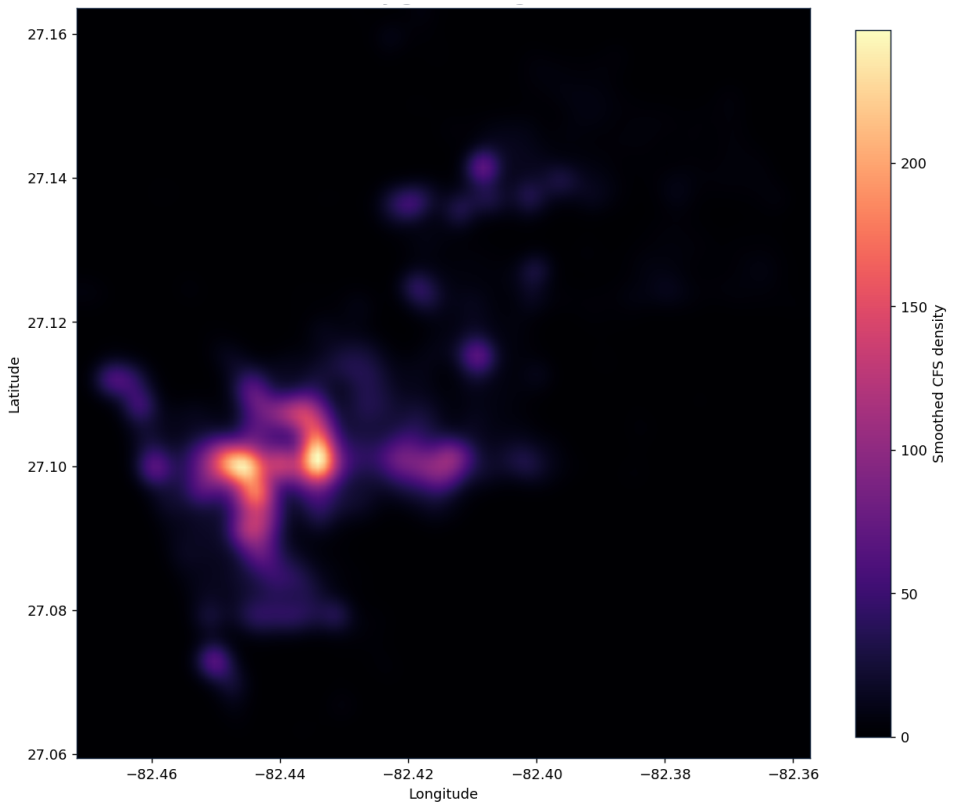


Figure 11 next isolates citizen-initiated calls for service (i.e., the 911 and non-emergency demand that members of the public place on the Department) by removing activity that officers generated themselves, such as traffic stops and security checks. This produced the available measure of community demand. This enables a more nuanced understanding of staffing because the workload model applied later (the Wilson & Weiss method) is built on the calls the public makes, not on total recorded activity; including officer-generated work which would overstate the demand the Department is obligated to answer. The map shows two separate concentrations of demand in south Venice, roughly half a mile apart, corresponding to the downtown and the waterfront. A fainter band of demand extends to the northeast, and the northern residential areas generate comparatively little. The presence of two distinct peaks rather than one is operationally significant, because the downtown and the waterfront are separate sources of demand. In other words, both can become busy at the same time, with neither able to absorb the other's calls. This is an argument against

combining them into a single patrol zone, since one unit assigned to cover both could be pulled to one peak and leave the other without ready coverage.

Figure 11

Density of citizen-initiated calls for service only; community demand, with officer-initiated activity removed.



Next, Figure 12 places the two types of activity side by side. Citizen calls (left) are spread relatively broadly across residential neighborhoods, while officer-initiated activity (right) is more tightly concentrated; most visibly in the single intense hotspot on the US 41 corridor. This is the expected pattern as residents call from where they live, whereas officers direct their self-initiated work to the places where they can intervene most effectively, such as main roads, businesses, and intersections. This distinction has a practical consequence as citizen demand is fixed (i.e., the Department must answer the calls it receives, wherever they originate). Officer-initiated activity is different, however, as it reflects a decision about where to direct patrol effort, and it can therefore be redirected. If the Department wants a greater presence on the growing east side, this is something it can adjust directly, without waiting for citizen call volume there to rise far enough to force the issue.

The same point explains a limitation in any measure based on "reports per officer". A large share of officer-initiated activity (security checks, traffic stops, and similar work) produces a record in the CAD system but no written report. A productivity measure that counts only written reports therefore misses much of this work and understates what officers are actually doing.

Figure 12

Citizen-initiated demand (left) versus officer-initiated activity (right).

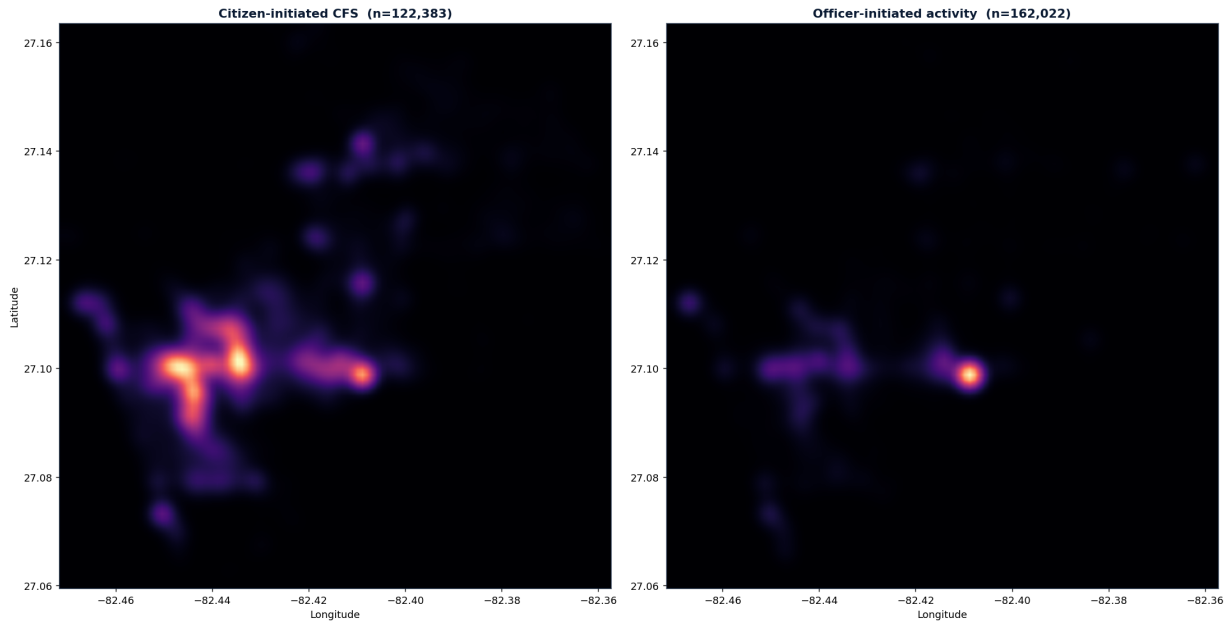
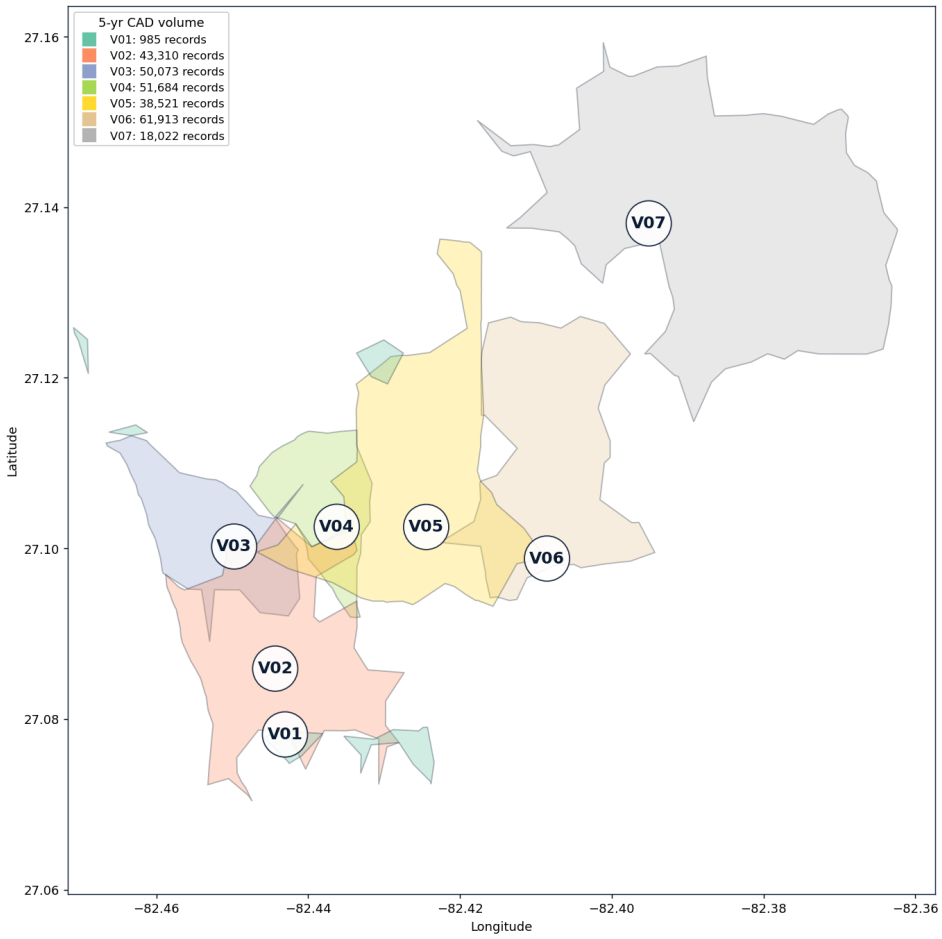


Figure 13, below, maps the seven patrol zones. Rather than drawing them from a formal boundary, the map builds each zone from the CAD records actually assigned to it, so the shapes reflect where the work in each zone genuinely took place (i.e., its operational footprint). V01 is the small marine and waterway zone; V06 covers the beach and downtown; V07 is the large zone spanning the east and north of the city. In places, the colored zones appear to overlap, which can give the impression that two zones share the same ground. In practice they do not; the patrol zones are distinct, non-overlapping areas. The apparent overlap is a by-product of how the shapes were drawn. Because each zone is traced around the actual locations of its calls, and a small number of calls are recorded at or near the edges of a zone -- or are occasionally tagged to one zone while physically sitting just inside another -- the outline of one zone can stretch slightly into the territory of its neighbor. The effect is most visible where two busy zones meet. It reflects the scatter of individual call points at the boundaries, not a true sharing of patrol responsibility, and it does not affect the workload counts, which are based on the zone each call was assigned to rather than on the drawn shapes.

The zones differ substantially in both size and workload, and the two do not track together. V06 carries the most activity of any zone (approximately 62,000 records) within a compact downtown footprint. V07, by contrast, covers the largest land area but accounts for a much smaller share of activity. In short, the southern zones are small and busy, while the eastern zone is large and, for now, comparatively quiet. As such, this mismatch between a zone's size and its workload has a practical effect on coverage. If each zone is staffed with a similar number of units regardless of its size, the result is uneven service. A unit assigned to the large V07 zone is routinely far from its next call, simply because the zone is spread out, whereas units in the compact southern zones remain close to the demand they serve. This is the underlying case for reviewing how the zone boundaries are drawn, particularly because the current boundaries appear to predate the city's recent growth on the east side.

Figure 13

Operational footprint of each patrol zone (V01–V07), derived from the CAD records assigned to each.



It is worth highlighting that Zone V07 grew from approximately 2,600 records in 2020 to nearly 5,000 in 2024; an increase of roughly ninety percent, far outpacing every other zone. As such, response can be distributed across the whole zone rather than concentrated at a single new problem address, which is consistent with general residential and commercial buildout rather than one emergent location. Further, V07 has the highest citizen-call share of any zone, at about fifty-two percent, indicating that the growth represents genuine community demand and not increased patrol activity. This is a forward-looking staffing need. Broad-based, citizen-driven growth on the east side is the pattern that justifies a dedicated east-side resourcing as the area builds out; deferring until V07's volume matches the downtown's would mean sustained slow response on the east side in the interim.

Figure 14.
Zone V07 activity in 2020 (left) and 2024 (right). New activity is distributed across the zone rather than concentrated at one address.

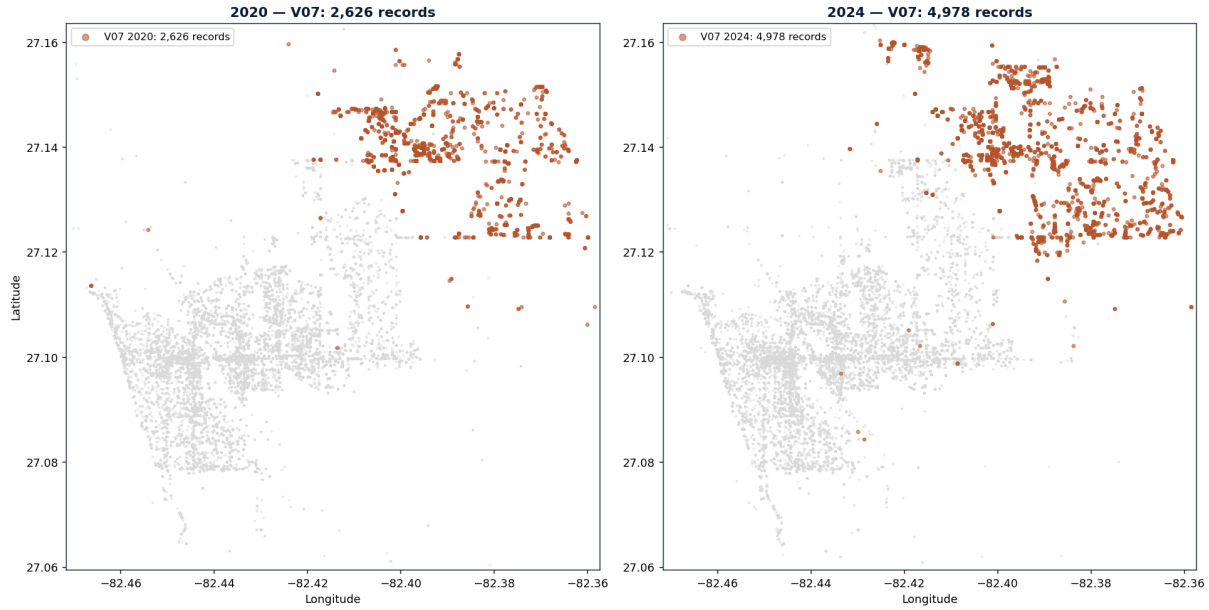
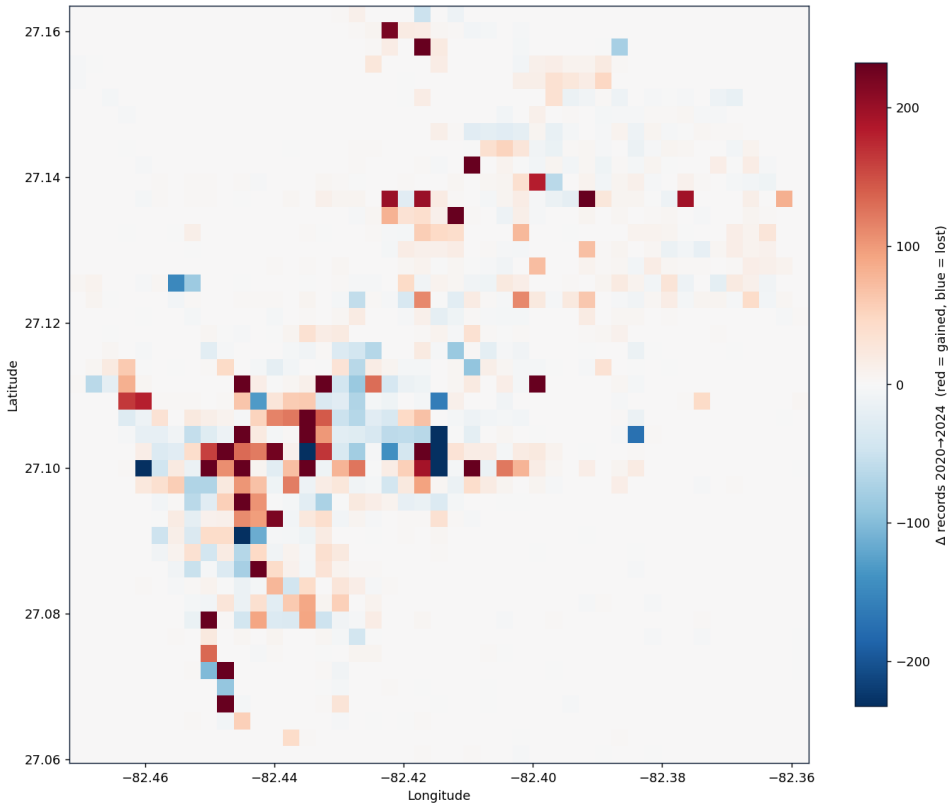


Figure 15 maps how activity has changed across the city between 2020 and 2024. Areas shown in red gained activity over that period; areas in blue lost it. The main finding here is that red was across the core and extending eastward toward East Venice Avenue and the Laurel Road area, with only modest declines in a few pockets of the older northwest. The overall direction of movement is therefore eastward. This has a bearing on how the Department should respond. The growth is not concentrated at a single location that could be addressed with one fixed point; it is a broad shift spread across the eastern side of the city. A change of that kind is better met with a flexible, zone-level response, rebalancing zone boundaries and establishing a dedicated east-side unit. It also

warrants reviewing the trend each year, since the eastward movement is likely to continue as development on that side of the city proceeds.

Figure 15

Change in activity from 2020 to 2024. Red indicates gained activity, blue lost.



To compare locations on equal footing, analyses then *tiled* city into uniform hexagonal cells roughly a quarter-mile across, each colored by its five-year count of high-priority calls. Uniform cells avoid the distortion introduced by unequal zone sizes. Figure 16 shows that three adjacent cells in south Venice carry far more urgent demand than anywhere else; together roughly twenty-seven percent of the city's high-priority calls within a contiguous area only a few blocks wide. Concentration of this kind is operationally favorable, because it creates leverage. If roughly a quarter of urgent demand falls within three adjacent quarter-mile cells, a focused, place-based effort there (e.g., problem-oriented policing on the worst addresses, directed patrol, and public-space management) can move the citywide figures without adding officers.

Figure 16

High-priority (P1/P2) call volume by uniform hex cell (~1,500 ft across). The three highest cells are labeled.

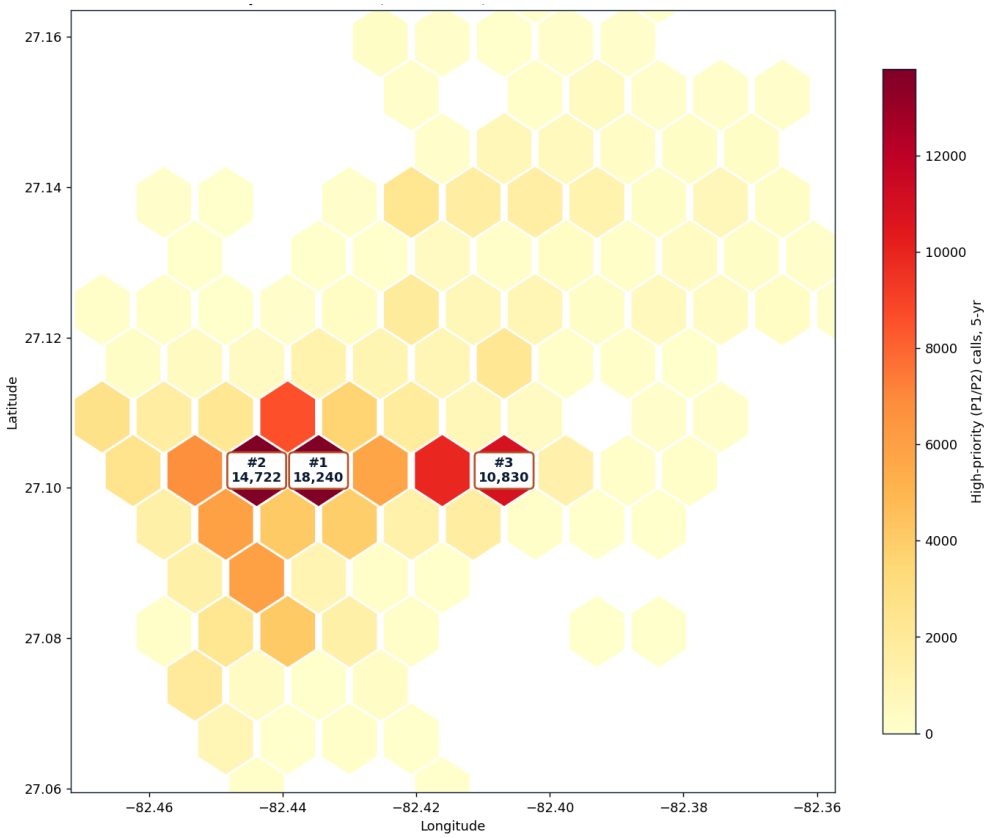
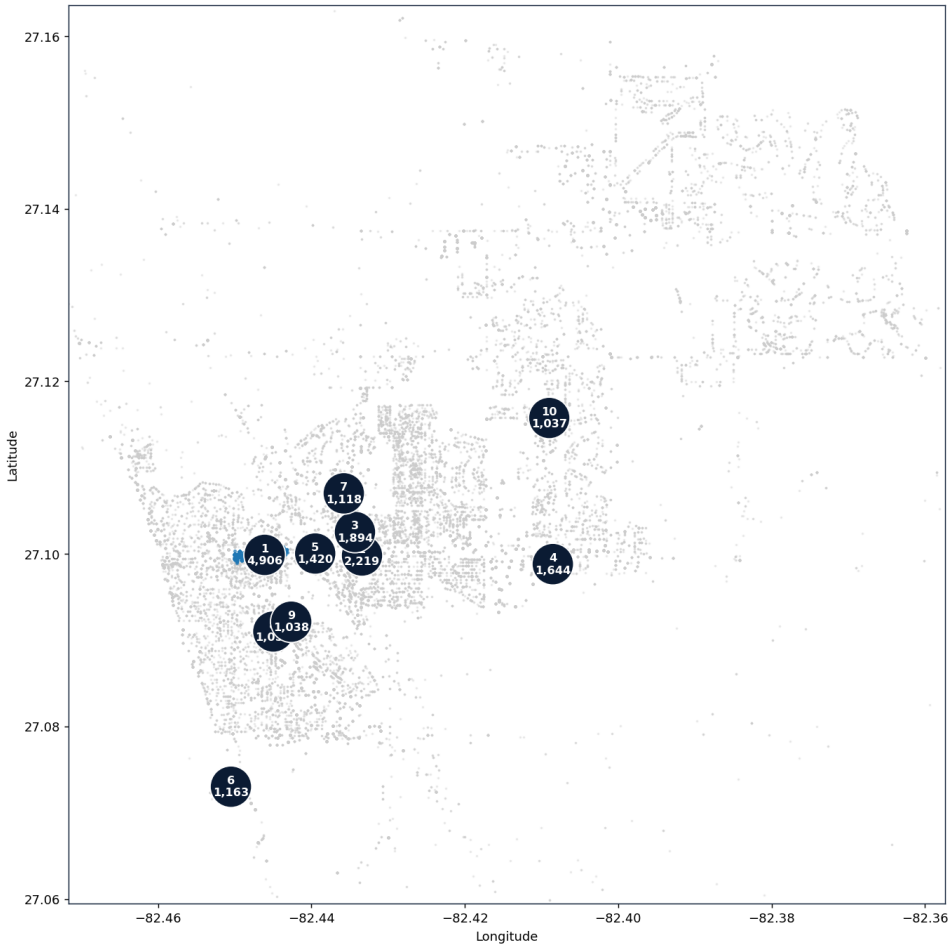


Figure 17 applies DBSCAN, a clustering method that identifies tight concentrations of points without requiring any boundaries to be drawn in advance, to the high-priority calls. The ten largest clusters are numbered; the grey background traces the remaining activity and, incidentally, the street network. The clusters appeared to be distinct. The largest, approximately 4,900 calls, is dominated by illegal-parking, suspicious-person, and disturbance calls. A second large cluster is defined by traffic crashes, marking it as an engineering-and-enforcement concern addressed in a later section. A third is a station-area artifact, walk-in reports, and is reported for transparency. The implication is that clusters call for different responses rather than uniformly more patrol: the public-space cluster for directed patrol and problem-solving, and the crash cluster for traffic enforcement.

Figure 17

Density-based (DBSCAN) clusters of high-priority calls. The ten largest are numbered with their five-year counts; grey points are background activity.



A second clustering, shown in Figure 18 applied the same method at finer scale to everyday disorder rather than only the highest-priority calls. Disorder spreads across many more small clusters than the high-priority view but still concentrates in the south-and-corridor core. The two analyses suggest that the broader one describes the routine workload that fills patrol time between emergencies, while the high-priority clustering identifies the acute pressure points. The disorder pattern shows that the core requires sustained rather than occasional presence, and it pairs with the address-level analysis discussed later which names specific locations (e.g., Motel 6 cluster, where a single problem-solving effort can retire dozens of recurring calls).

Mapping median response time for CFS onto the same hex cells, Figure 19 shows a gradient from the center outward. The central and southern core responds in roughly three to five minutes (green), while the northern and eastern periphery runs ten to fifteen minutes or more (red); the fastest and slowest cells differ by a factor of about seven. Slow response on the periphery is principally a function of distance rather than effort, as units are simply far from peripheral calls when they arrive, which means the immediate remedy is positioning rather than headcount alone: posting or rebalancing units toward the north and east during peak hours. This is the finer-resolution form of the V07 response gap identified above and it establishes that the gap is distributed across the whole

of the periphery rather than concentrated at one location, so a single relocated post would not close it.

Figure 18.
A finer-scale clustering of disorder calls (disturbance, battery, theft, suspicious person, trespassing, family disturbance).

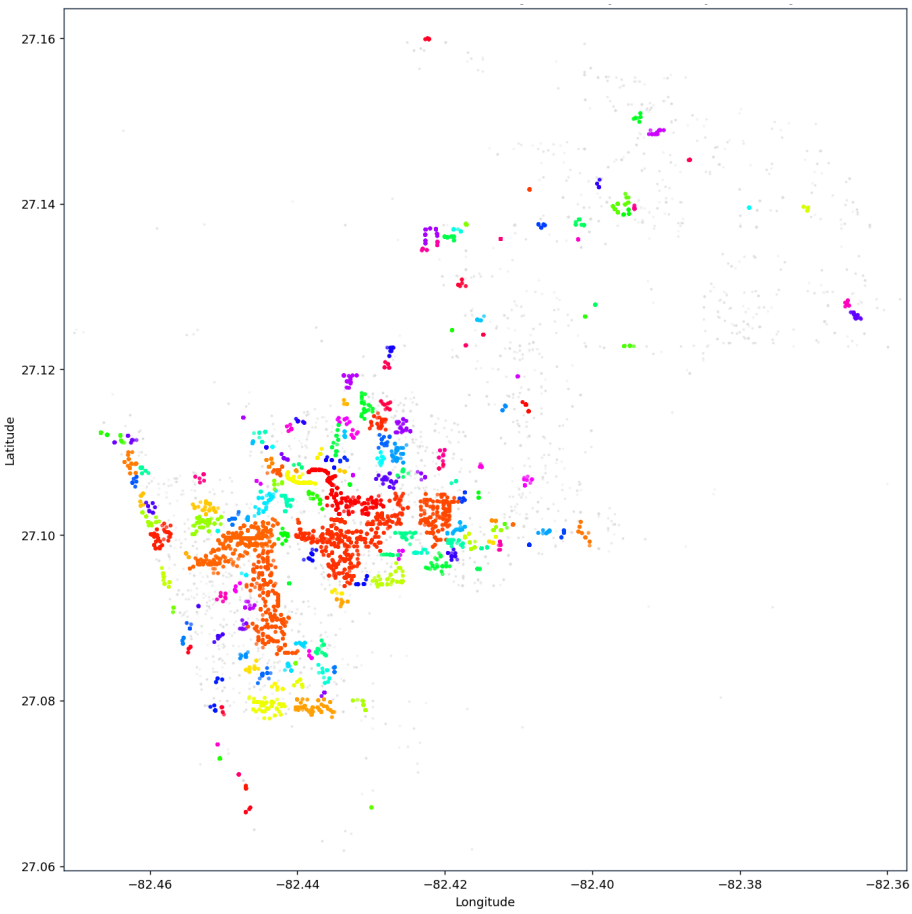
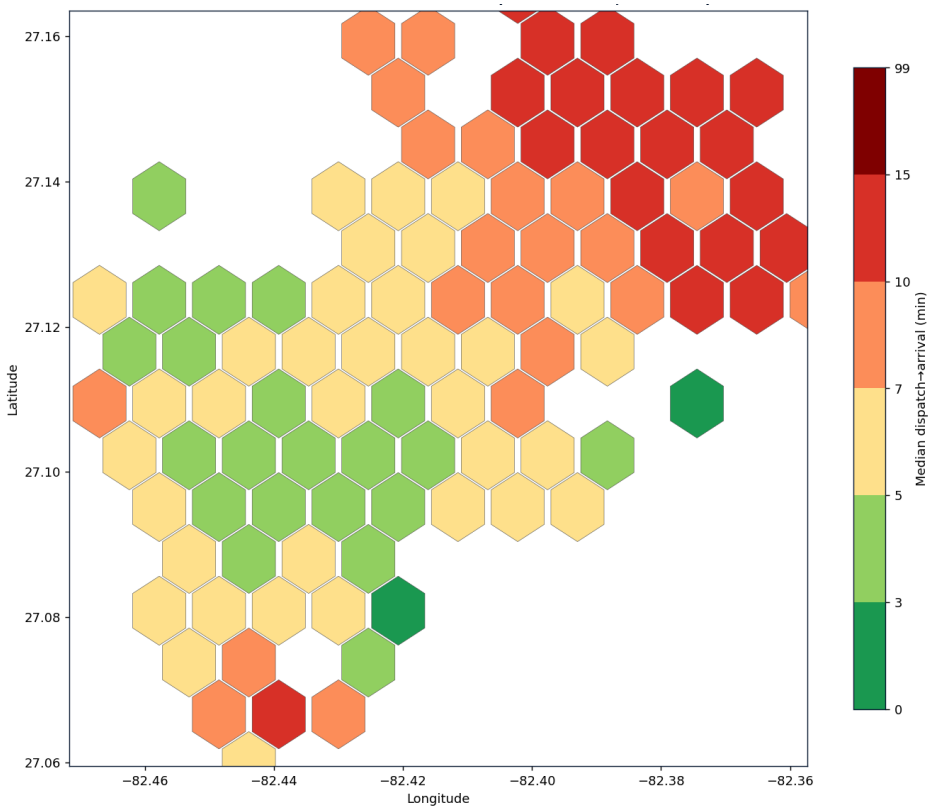


Figure 20 separates two measures for the weekday midday window: cells in the upper quartile for call volume (orange) and cells in the upper quartile for slow response (blue). A cell that was in the top quartile on both would appear red; none does. The high-volume cells sit in the south-and-corridor core, and the slow-response cells sit in the northern and eastern periphery, with no overlap between them. This separation changes the staffing perspective, because the two problems require different remedies. The busy core needs additional coverage during the midday peak to preserve its already-fast response as demand rises. The slow periphery needs units posted closer to it, a change in positioning rather than in coverage volume.

Figure 19

Median dispatch-to-arrival time for CFS by hex cell. Green is fast (under ~5 min); red is slow (10–15+ min).



Finally, Figure 21 ties the geography to the clock, showing citizen-call volume for each zone across the hours of the day. The US 41 corridor zone (V04) carries the heaviest sustained daytime load; demand across the central zones (V02–V05) builds through late morning and remains high into the evening, with the outlined 11:00–14:00 window a shared pressure point; and overnight demand is light across all zones. The pattern supports a swing shift timed to roughly 13:00–23:00, which captures the highest citizen demand and the highest officer-initiated activity simultaneously. The current roster already approximates this, and the evidence argues for retaining it and reinforcing the early-afternoon overlap.

Figure 20

Weekday midday (11:00–14:00). Orange marks upper-quartile call volume; blue marks upper-quartile (slow) response time.

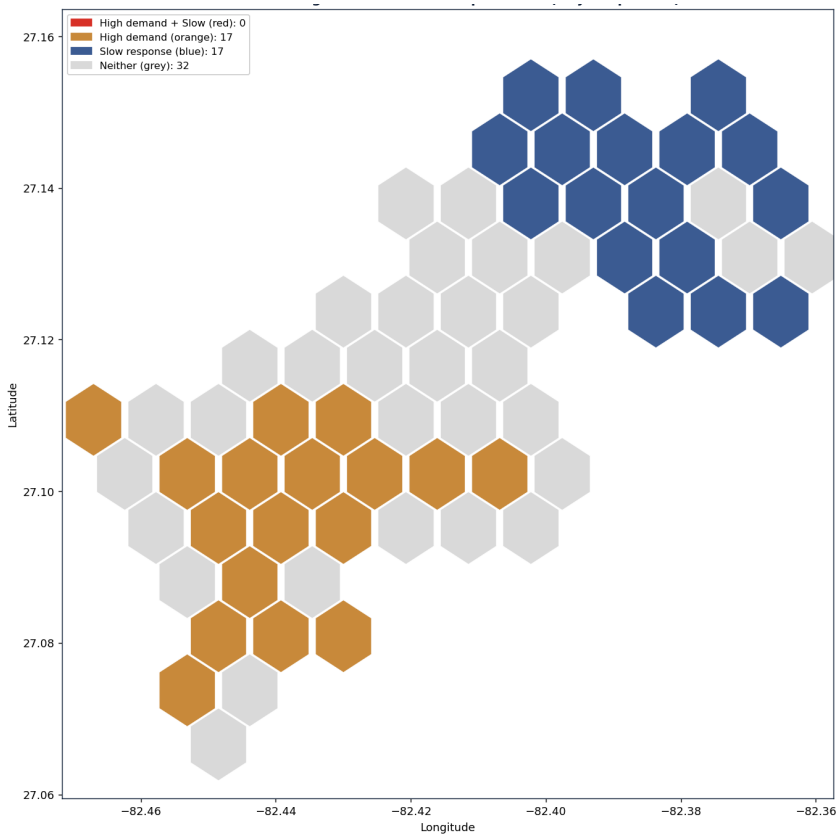
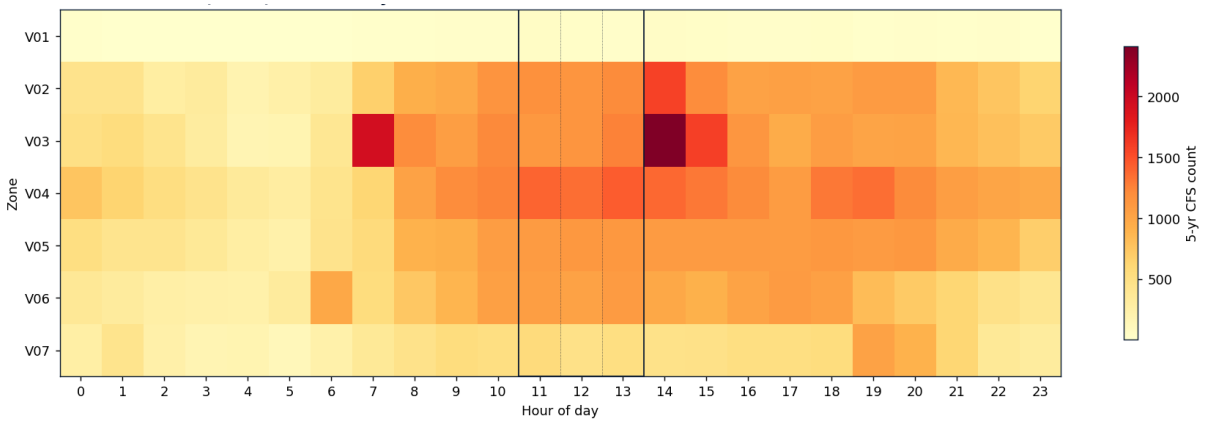


Figure 21

Citizen-call volume by hour of day and zone, five-year totals. Darker indicates higher volume; the 11:00–14:00 window is outlined.



Workload-Based Patrol Staffing (Wilson & Weiss).

To estimate how many patrol officers the Department requires, the study used the workload-based method developed by Wilson and Weiss. The method rests on the principle that the number of officers a community needs should be derived from the actual demand placed on the agency, meaning the volume of citizen calls and the time those calls consume, rather than from a population ratio or a historical authorized figure. Wilson and Weiss describe four traditional approaches to patrol staffing, namely per capita, minimum staffing, authorized level, and workload-based, and they identify only the workload-based approach as defensible. The International Association of Chiefs of Police has likewise stated that officer-per-thousand-population ratios are inappropriate as a basis for staffing decisions. The workload method proceeds in six steps. It examines the distribution of calls by time, examines the nature of the calls to confirm they reflect citizen demand, estimates the time consumed per call, calculates the shift-relief factor, sets a performance objective, and computes the officers required, scaled by the relief factor, and rounded up. The result of that calculation is therefore an assigned-officer figure, meaning the number that must be carried on the roster, because the relief factor is applied within the computation itself.

Two adaptations were made for Venice. First, the Department's CAD records each unit's dispatch and clear time, so the time consumed on a call was measured directly by summing the time of every assigned unit. This produced a mean of 57.3 unit-minutes and about 1.96 units per citizen call in 2024. Second, officer-initiated event types such as status codes, vehicle stops, security checks, and patrol requests were filtered out explicitly, since the method counts only citizen demand as workload. Of 49,607 unique CAD events in 2024, about 78 percent were officer-initiated and about 20 percent citizen-generated.

Overall, citizen demand rises at 08:00, peaks between 13:00 and 15:00, and tapers after 18:00. About 71 percent of citizen calls arrive during the day shift and 29 percent during the night shift. This day-shift concentration is more pronounced than in the medium and large agencies Wilson and Weiss use as illustrations, and it becomes the constraint in the staffing result below, because demand is heavily weighted toward the day while patrol slots are currently split evenly between day and night.

The weekly and seasonal patterns are comparatively flat. Thursday and Friday are the heaviest days and Sunday the lightest, but the spread across the week is narrow. By month, the late-winter period of February through April runs moderately above the summer, consistent with the seasonal population. The largest citizen call types in 2024 were assist-other-agency, alarm, suspicious-person, officer-public-service, and welfare-check calls, while the longest on-scene times attach to traffic crashes at a median of about 37 minutes and trespassing at about 34 minutes. The top thirty citizen call types account for about 86 percent of citizen volume.

Table 6.

2024 citizen calls by hour block.

Hour block	Citizen calls	Share of day
00 to 06 (overnight low)	919	9.1%
07 to 11 (morning rise)	2,764	27.5%
12 to 18 (peak)	4,401	43.7%
19 to 23 (decline)	1,832	18.2%
Day shift (07 to 18)	7,165	71.2%
Night shift (19 to 06)	2,903	28.8%

The activity removed from the workload count included roughly 39,000 self-initiated events in 2024, about four times the citizen call volume, led by security checks at about 15,200 and vehicle stops at about 6,000. This is excluded from the workload because it is not citizen demand. The sheer volume of self-initiated activity, four times the citizen call load, shows that Venice officers are generating a large amount of proactive work, which is only possible if they have substantial uncommitted time available. That pattern is the signature of an agency already operating near the lower, more discretionary end of the performance-objective range explained below.

Because the CAD system records dispatch and clear times for every unit, the total time the Department spends on each citizen call was measured directly by summing across all assigned units. Citizen call volume has been consistent, between roughly 9,200 and 10,100 calls a year, and total annual workload has held between about 8,700 and 10,200 unit-hours. Per-call time peaked in 2023 at 63.6 minutes and returned to 57.3 minutes in 2024, so the model was calibrated against a consistent baseline rather than a transient spike, and as such, 2024 served as a reliable base year.

Table 7.

Annual citizen call volume and time consumed.

Year	Citizen calls	Median scene (min)	Mean unit-min	Units / call	Total unit-hrs
2020	9,183	23.2	57.0	1.92	8,724
2021	9,554	22.4	60.4	1.95	9,618
2022	10,072	22.0	60.3	2.00	10,122
2023	9,616	23.0	63.6	2.06	10,193
2024	10,068	21.5	57.3	1.96	9,615

The shift-relief factor converts officers needed on duty into officers that must be assigned, because no officer is available every day of the year once scheduled days off, leave, and training are counted. The Department operates 12-hour shifts on a seven-of-fourteen-day rotation, so scheduled days off alone account for 2,190 hours per officer per year before any leave or training is added. The factor derived from the Department's records was 2.51[4] for 2024, meaning about two and a half officers must be assigned for each one on duty, or equivalently that only about 40 percent of the roster is available on a given day.

Table 8.

Shift-relief factor by year.

Year	Sworn	Avg leave (hr)	Avg training (hr)	Total off (hr/yr)	Relief factor
2021	53	288	159	2,637	2.51
2022	53	235	118	2,543	2.38
2023	52	275	144	2,609	2.47
2024	52	331	117	2,638	2.51
2025	55	292	132	2,614	2.48

The 2022 dip to 2.38 reflects unusually low leave, and the return to 2.51 in 2024 is driven by average leave rising from 235 to 331 hours per officer over two years, a 41 percent increase, even as training hours fell. This is a workforce-health signal worth monitoring, because each 0.1 increase in the relief factor adds roughly 1.7 patrol slots to sustain the same working strength.

Next, the model sets the share of an officer's shift that should be committed to answering citizen calls, with the remainder left for community policing, self-initiated activity, follow-up, and administrative work. A patrol force cannot be staffed to be busy on calls 100 percent of the time, because calls arrive unevenly, and the uncommitted time is both the buffer that absorbs surges and the capacity in which proactive policing happens. Wilson and Weiss recommend each community determine its own performance objective based on its needs, circumstances and preference, noting 50 percent as a potential for illustration. A 33 percent objective reserves roughly two-thirds of the shift for discretionary work and suits an agency emphasizing community policing, while a 66 percent objective leaves only one- third discretionary time and suits a high-volume, response-focused department that handles proactive work through a separate unit.

[4] Technically, the shift relief factor can vary between units; the factor reported here reflects a holistic, agency-wide perspective rather than a unit-level breakdown.

Table 9.

Performance objective options.

Objective	Implied use of a 12-hour shift	Best fit
33% obligated	About 4 hours calls, 8 hours discretionary	Community-policing model, high proactive expectations
50% obligated	About 6 hours calls, 6 hours discretionary	Balanced model[5]
66% obligated	About 8 hours calls, 4 hours discretionary	High-volume or specialist split-force model

The Department's stated strategic priorities, namely community engagement, proactive anti-crime work, and quality-of-life policing, are inconsistent with the 66 percent objective and are most consistent with the 33 percent objective, or at minimum the 50 percent default. The large observed volume of self-initiated activity suggests officers currently operate nearer the 33 percent end of the range than the 66 percent end.

Using the 2024 data, 10,068 citizen calls, 57.3 unit-minutes per call, and the day-shift weighting described above, the method produces a patrol requirement. The first is the number of patrol officers needed on duty, meaning physically working the road, to meet each performance objective. The second is the roster needed to sustain that on-duty presence, which is the on-duty figure multiplied by the relief factor of 2.51, because only about 40 percent of any roster is available on a given day. The roster is the figure that must be authorized and funded, and it is the figure directly comparable to the 24 currently authorized.

Note, the authorized roster of 24 sits below the roster required at every objective, including the response-focused 66 percent objective, which still needs a roster of about 35. At the balanced 50 percent default the roster requirement is about 43, and at the 33 percent community-policing objective appropriate to the Department's mission it is about 65. The Department is therefore patrol-understaffed against its workload once the relief factor is properly applied, and the 24 authorized translates to only about nine or ten officers actually on the road across all shifts at any given time. Second, the day shift is the main constraint, because 71 percent of citizen calls fall in the day while patrol slots are currently split evenly between day and night, so at the community-

[5] The 50% and 33% obligated-time figures are used here purely to illustrate the model; they are not recommendations or defaults. The appropriate level must be set locally. The point of the model is to show how policy preferences, such as how much proactive time is desired, translate into staffing requirements, which helps frame conversations about wants versus needs within what is affordable.

policing objective the day shift alone needs 17 officers on duty, a roster of about 43. Third, the large volume of self-initiated activity does not contradict this, because that proactive work is precisely what the discretionary time in the performance objective is meant to fund, and it is sustainable only if the roster supports it, which at 24 it does not.

Figure 22.

Patrol slots required on duty (blue) and the roster required to sustain them after the relief factor.

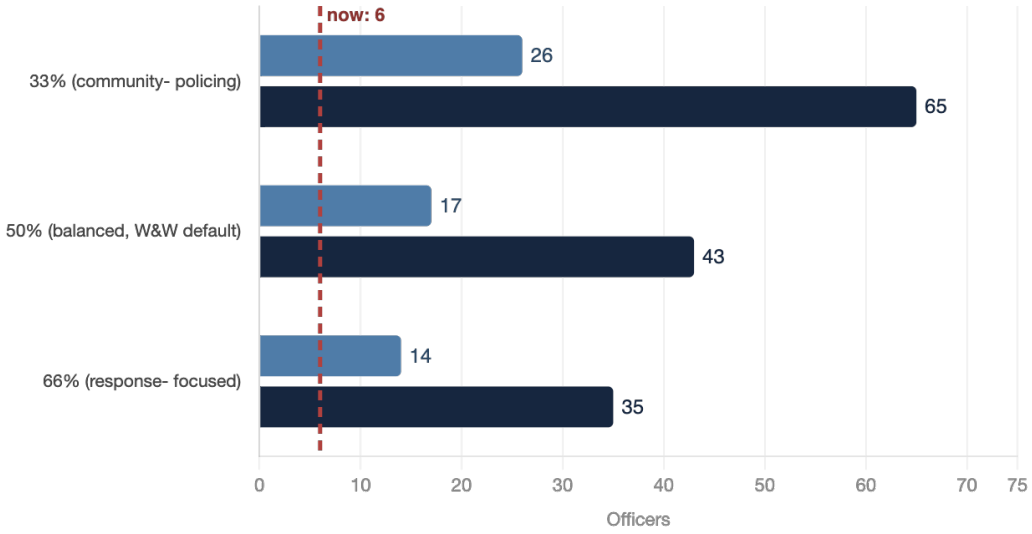
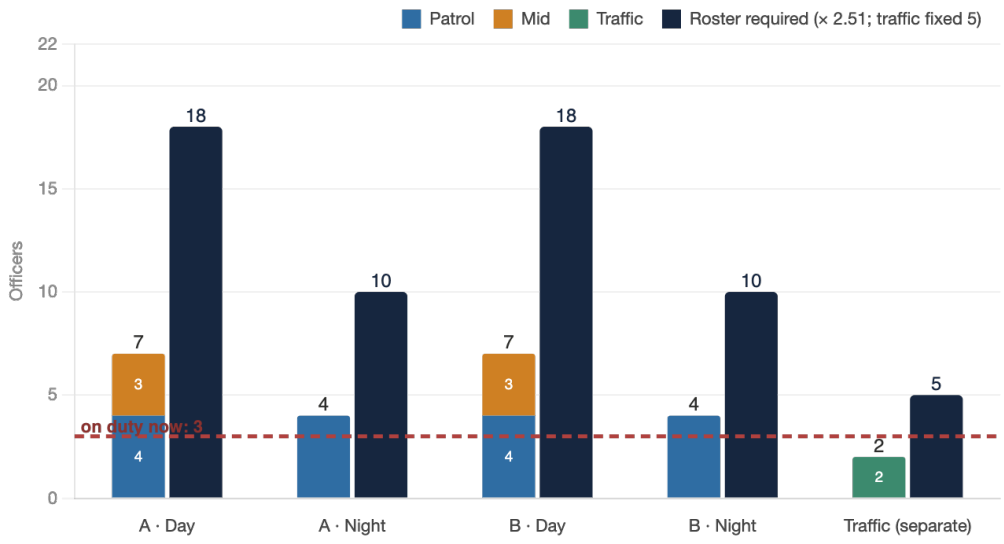


Figure 23.

Day and night requirement at the community-policing objective, on-duty slots and the roster to sustain them



However, as a general limitation to this, Wilson and Weiss note the model works best above 15,000 citizen calls a year, and Venice's 10,068 is about two-thirds of that, which tends to push the recommended number below what most practitioners would consider reasonable. The workload figures should therefore be treated as a lower bound and read alongside the coverage and minimum-staffing analysis. On the demand projections below, Venice crosses the 15,000-call threshold in the early-to-mid 2030s, after which the method applies without that caveat.

Going forward, the City's Planning and Zoning projections show permanent residents growing about 50 percent by 2045, with seasonal residents essentially flat, so the functional population, meaning permanent plus seasonal and the relevant denominator for police workload, grows from about 38,000 today toward about 55,000. Demand was projected under an aging-adjusted scenario that adds the effect of a 65-and-over cohort growing faster than the general population and consuming about 20 percent more time per call. Translating that demand into patrol slots on duty, then applying the relief factor of 2.51 to express the result as roster, produces the trajectory below for the two-year, five-year, and ten-year horizons.

Table 10.

Patrol slots on duty and the roster required by horizon and objective, aging-adjusted demand,

Horizon	Functional population	On duty 50%	On duty 33%	Roster 50%	Roster 33%
Today (2025)	39,200	18	28	45	70
2-year (2027)	40,200	19	29	48	73
5-year (2030)	41,800	20	30	50	75
10-year (2035)	45,700	22	33	55	83

At the default 50 percent objective, the roster requirement rises from about 45 today to about 55 by the ten-year horizon, against the current 24 authorized. At the 33 percent community-policing objective appropriate to the Department's current culture, the roster requirement runs from about 70 today to about 83 by 2035. On duty, the equivalent figures grow from 18 and 28 officers today to 22 and 33 by 2035.

Staff Efficiency and Productive Hours

This section addresses how the Department's available staff time is used and where the most consequential efficiency questions sit, given the workload documented in the section above. First, the staff records cover 2021 through 2025, a different window from the CAD data (2020 through 2024), so cross-references between the two exclude 2020 staff data and 2025 CAD data. Second, the staff records are keyed to officer name or department ID, while the CAD data is keyed to

dispatched Unit ID; without a roster table mapping units to officers by date and shift, which was not available, the two cannot be reliably joined for officer-level CAD productivity. Third, the productivity measures the staff data supports (e.g., reports written, court hours, and off-duty detail hours per officer) capture only part of an officer's work. Most of the activity documented in Chapter 1 (security checks, vehicle stops, status time) generates a CAD record but no entry in the staff data, so it is invisible to a report-based productivity measure.

Based on the above, reports written per officer appeared to fall about 14 percent over the period. Taken alone, that reads as a productivity decline; placed against the CAD data, this suggests a reduction in reports. However, Table 11 sets reports written beside the citizen-call volume, expressed as the share of citizen calls that produced a written report.

Table 11.

Reports written and the reports-per-call ratio, 2021–2025.

Year	Sworn	Reports written	Reports/officer	CFS records (CAD)	Reports/CFS
2021	53	1,576	29.7	20,282	7.8%
2022	53	1,674	31.6	21,792	7.7%
2023	52	1,669	32.1	21,393	7.8%
2024	52	1,444	27.8	21,565	6.7%
2025	55	1,399	25.4	n/a (CAD ends 2024)[6]	n/a

From 2021 to 2023 the ratio was consistent at 7.7 to 7.8 percent; roughly one written report for every thirteen dispatched citizen calls. In 2024 it fell to 6.7 percent, a 14 percent drop in a single year, while citizen-call volume was essentially flat (21,393 to 21,565). However, what the data cannot do is explain why this decrease occurred. That said, the productive-hours model can convert the shift-relief analysis from Chapter 4 into a per-officer productivity floor (i.e., the number of hours each officer is actually available for work after leave, training, and other unavailability are removed).

To compute this, a roster of 53 to 55 sworn provides a nominal 110,000 to 114,000 work hours a year. Leave and training consume approximately 18,500 to 23,300 hours, about 21 percent of that nominal availability. Court appearances and off-duty detail consume a further 6,000 to 6,400 hours. As such, what remains -- roughly 85,000 to 87,000 hours, or about 1,580 hours per officer

[6] CAD data was provided, but changes to the systems over the period mean these figures are not strictly a like-for-like comparison.

per year -- is the productive floor. For context, the U.S. national average is about 1,800 productive hours per full-time employee per year; Venice runs roughly 12 percent below that, consistent with its 21 percent leave-and-training share. But, the figure is sensitive to that share, if leave and training rose to 25 percent of gross hours, which is roughly what the 2024 trend implies. In other words, the productive floor would fall to about 1,440 hours, the equivalent of losing about 8 officers' worth of productive capacity from the existing roster without any change in headcount. This is why workforce health, not just headcount, is an important staffing variable.

But, it is important to also state that the report output is distributed unevenly across officers, which is normal but worth quantifying. Among officers active for most of the period, annual report volume varied widely; the highest-producing officers wrote well over ten times as many reports as the lowest, with a small number averaging more than 60 reports a year and a comparable number averaging only a handful. The exact spread depends on which officers are counted as active patrol producers, since report volume varies legitimately by assignment: a detective, a traffic officer, etc. generate very different report counts by the nature of their work, not their effort. As such, to judge whether this spread was unusual, the analysis used the Gini coefficient. The Gini is a standard measure, borrowed from the study of income inequality, that summarizes on a single 0-to-1 scale how evenly a quantity is shared across a group: a value of 0 would mean every officer wrote exactly the same number of reports, and a value of 1 would mean a single officer wrote all of them. Measured on each officer's average annual output across the period, the coefficient was approximately 0.42. That sits in the moderate range (i.e., meaningful inequality), of the kind one would expect when a roster mixes assignments and tenure, rather than the extreme concentration that would signal one or two officers carrying the entire reporting load. (Measured year by year, the coefficient is less stable, ranging from about 0.45 to 0.61, with 2024 among the more concentrated years; a point that connects to the single-year drop in reports-per-call discussed above.)

The top ten producers by five-year report volume accounted for about 30 percent of all 7,762 reports filed. Table 12 lists them alongside their five-year sick-leave and off-duty detail hours.

Table 12

Top ten patrol officers by five-year report volume, with sick-leave and off-duty detail hours.

Rank	Officer	5-yr reports	Sick hrs (5-yr)	FOP (5-yr)
1	Officer A	374	453	1,597
2	Officer B	337	421	832
3	Officer C	310	486	947
4	Officer D	288	441	654

Rank	Officer	5-yr reports	Sick hrs (5-yr)	FOP (5-yr)
5	Officer E	270	163	1,023
6	Officer F	259	396	458
7	Officer G	225	585	388
8	Officer H	222	431	612
9	Officer I	211	71	1,205
10	Officer J	210	281	892

Total leave grew from 15,285 hours in 2021 to 17,210 in 2024 before easing to 16,047 in 2025. The total is less informative than the composition. See Table 13 for the breakdown.

Table 13

Leave composition by category, 2021–2025.

Leave type	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	5-yr Δ
Vacation	5,058	4,712	5,029	5,361	5,432	+7.4%
Sick (planned+unplanned)	4,501	3,286	2,477	3,499	3,716	–17.4%
Comp time	1,872	957	789	1,213	1,256	–32.9%
Holiday not worked	1,402	1,478	1,512	1,489	1,521	+8.5%
FMLA	468	180	1,032	1,214	856	+82.9%
Funeral	120	104	144	168	112	–6.7%
Workers comp	62	48	85	192	242	+290%
Bereavement / other	152	230	186	215	198	+30.3%
Administrative	45	62	78	137	1,322	+2,838%
Total leave	15,285	12,435	14,294	17,210	16,047	+5.0%

As noted above, vacation use is steady at around 5,000 to 5,400 hours a year, so what is apparent is that the vacation system is not under stress. Sick leave fell from 2021 to 2023 and then partly rebounded. FMLA increased from a 2022 low of 180 hours (one officer) to a 2024 peak of 1,214 hours (six officers); when six officers in a 52-officer roster are on family or medical leave at once, the agency is absorbing an additional resource burden not captured by the analyses above, nor captured by any of the models in this report. Finally, administrative leave increased from 137 hours in 2024 to 1,322 in 2025, roughly a tenfold increase equivalent to about 33 work-weeks of paid suspended time.

Court and deposition activity grew sharply over the period, from about 87 hours in 2021 to 168.8 in 2025, which was a 94 percent increase, with the number of distinct officers attending rising from 16 to 27. This growth appears to align with the 91 percent rise in general-investigations caseload, together with increased traffic-related testimony.

Table 14

Court and deposition activity, 2021–2025.

Year	Events	Total hours	Distinct officers	Avg hrs/event
2021	31	86.8	16	2.80
2022	26	60.0	19	2.31
2023	57	116.7	24	2.05
2024	51	102.8	23	2.02
2025	67	168.8	27	2.52

Court time is costly because it removes an officer from patrol or investigative work for the full duration of the appearance, including travel and waiting. The increase of roughly 81 hours a year is small at the individual level, accounting for about 1.4 hours per officer per year; however, this adds about 0.05 of a patrol officer's annual capacity to the workload model, and it is rising.

Off-duty detail hours (i.e., work paid by external clients and administered through the Fraternal Order of Police program, separate from regular duty and not captured in CAD) grew 177 percent over the period, from 2,233 hours in 2021 to 6,192 in 2024, to 5,612 in 2025. See Table 15

Table 15

Off-duty detail hours by year. Payroll figures are indicative at $60/hr.

Year	Total FOP hrs	Participating officers	Avg hrs/participant	Indicative payroll
2021	2,233	24	93	$134K
2022	3,954	34	116	$237K
2023	4,967	35	142	$298K
2024	6,192	40	155	$372K
2025	5,612	44	128	$337K

It is worth highlighting that the growth in off-duty work is concentrated among a small number of high-volume officers. Of the fifteen officers with the most off-duty detail hours over the period,

five have since left the agency the single highest-volume officer at roughly 1,600 hours. Nothing in the data indicates that heavy detail work caused these departures. However, an officer carrying 40 hours of regular duty plus 10 to 15 hours of off-duty detail in a week is likely approaching the upper bound of what is sustainable, and once overtime and court time are added the total can climb higher still. The Department does not currently track total hours worked across regular duty, overtime, off-duty detail, and court time in any single place, so an officer accumulating a heavy combined load is not visible to supervisors in any one system. A simple combined-hours monitor would close that gap at low cost and serve as an early wellness indicator.

Investigations and Specialty Units

This section reviews specialty units, including investigations. First, between 2021 and 2025 the Department's general investigators opened 932 cases. Caseload rose 96 percent from 2021 to 2022 (from 108 to 212 cases), climbed again in 2023, and has held above 185 since. Figure 24 and Table 16 sets out the annual figures.

Figure 24

General Investigations cases opened per year, 2021–2025.

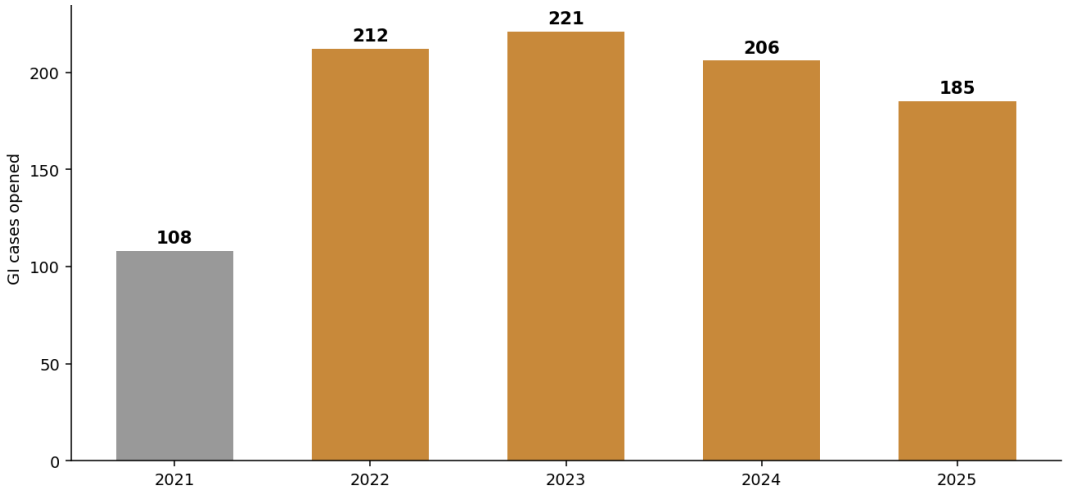


Table 16

General Investigations caseload, 2021–2025.

Year	Cases opened	Avg / investigator	% elder victim (65+)	Median days to disposition	Arrest rate
2021	108	≈14	39%	135	3.7%
2022	212	≈30	41%	102	20.3%
2023	221	≈28	44%	111	25.3%

Year	Cases opened	Avg / investigator	% elder victim (65+)	Median days to disposition	Arrest rate
2024	206	≈23	45%	154	13.6%
2025	185	≈21	45%	14*	8.7%

Note, the 2025 median is depressed because 57 of 185 cases were still active investigations at the data extract.

A common benchmark for detectives, drawn from the *Police Executive Research Forum*, is a sustainable load of roughly 12 to 15 active cases per investigator at any one time. The Department's annual cases-opened per investigator runs well above that, and the active backlog is presumably higher still. The rise in median days to disposition in 2024, from 111 to 154, is consistent with caseload exceeding sustainable per-investigator capacity. In addition, the median victim age across all 932 cases is 60. Victims aged 65 and over account for 401 cases, 43.0 percent of the total, and victims 75 and over for 224 cases, 24.0 percent. The leading offense category is grand theft in the $750–$5,000 range, which is overwhelmingly an elder-victim crime. As such, elder-fraud and elder-larceny investigations are more demanding than the average criminal investigation case: they require more documentation, have become more technology-centric, more victim contact, more coordination with family members, and more cooperation with external services (e.g., Adult Protective Services, banking partners, and assisted-living management). The 2024 median of 154 days to disposition reflects this. The aging-driven demand the patrol model projects for the future is already present in the detective caseload, and not yet accounted for in the recruitment provisions.

Table 17 provides an overview of the caseload. Two patterns are observable – (1) the open-case count at year end has more than doubled, indicating accumulating backlog, and (2) the arrest rate is volatile.

Table 17

GI quality indicators, 2021–2025.

Metric	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Cases per investigator	14	30	28	23	21
Median days to disposition	135	102	111	154	14*
Arrest rate	3.7%	20.3%	25.3%	13.6%	8.7%
Referred for prosecution	8	23	31	27	16
Open at year end	27	38	47	41	57

Note, two of the higher-clearance detectives left in the 2025 cohort, and the 2025 figure understates eventual outcomes because nearly a third of that year's cases were still active when the data was pulled. The year-end open count suggests that work is accumulating faster than it is being closed.

Court activity, as discussed above, grew 116 percent in event count from 31 in 2021 to 67 in 2025, with total hours up 94 percent and the number of distinct officers attending rising from 16 to 27. The growth tracks the investigations caseload. Per-event duration held in the normal two-to-three-hour range, so the increase is in the number of appearances, not their length. Court time is a leading indicator of investigative output reaching prosecution, and it should be read alongside the cases-referred-for-prosecution figure as a sign of case quality and case closures.

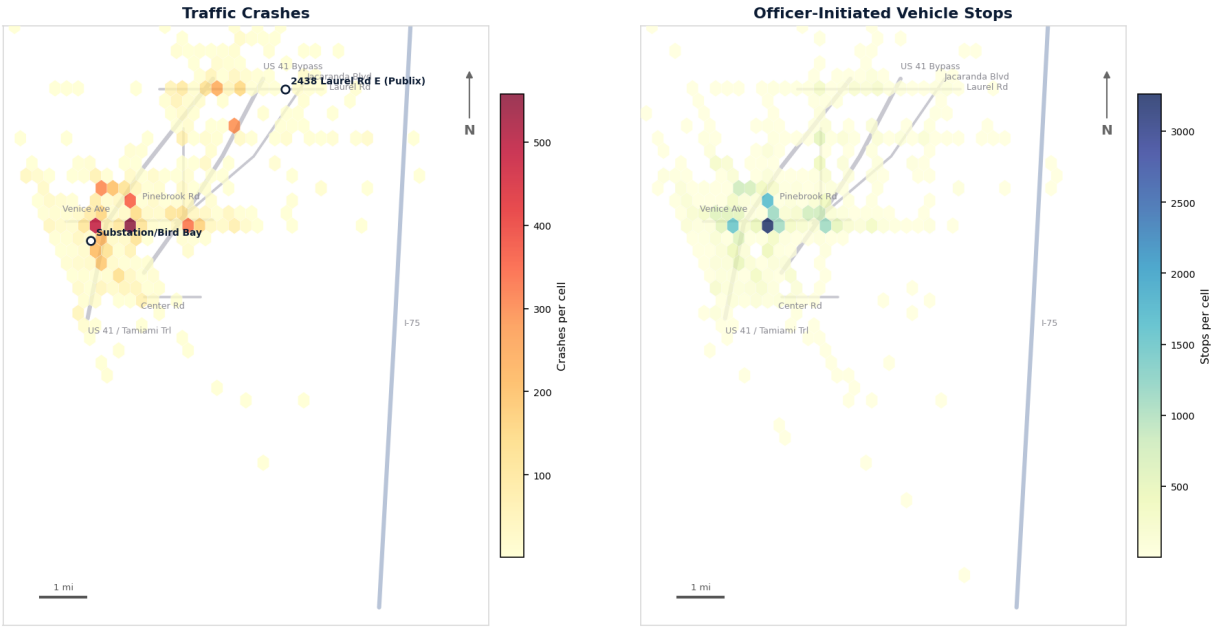
The marine unit responds on the Intracoastal Waterway and the Gulf approaches. CAD Zone V01 corresponds to the marine zone and recorded 992 events from 2020 to 2024, all but one falling within V01. The five-year emergency-call median for V01, 5 minutes 28 seconds, is slower than the land zone, but well within tolerance given travel times on the water. The marine workload is not large enough to support a separate workload model, and the current staffing of two to three part-time officers supplemented by patrol on rotation appears adequate.

Traffic Safety: Crashes, Enforcement, and Coverage

This section examined the Department's traffic-enforcement, and where the most actionable coverage gaps lie. The analysis was conducted at hex-cell resolution using the geocoded CAD records of vehicle stops and traffic crashes from 2020 through 2024. Overall, vehicle stops and crashes align strongly in space (i.e., a spatial correlation of about 0.91 citywide once I-75 is excluded), and they align poorly in time (i.e., a correlation of just 0.27, because crashes peak in the early afternoon while stops peak in the evening). Of the 62 cells with traffic activity, 58 percent are well-covered (high crash, high enforcement), while nine cells are underserved hotspots, most of them along the Laurel Road East corridor in zone V07. Zone V07 has the city's lowest enforcement intensity, at 1.4 stops per crash against a city average of 4.4 and combined with its 89 percent growth in CAD volume since 2020 it has the strongest case in the city for a dedicated traffic allocation. The single worst crash road section, Substation Road at Bird Bay Drive West, recorded 241 crashes in five years: about one every eight days.

Figure 25

Crash density (left) and vehicle-stop density (right), 2020–2024.



Mapping crash density against vehicle-stop density across the city produced two important findings. After excluding I-75, the spatial correlation between them was approximately 0.91. In plain terms, officers are conducting traffic stops where crashes actually occur. Of the 62 cells with significant traffic activity, 36 (58 percent) are well-covered, meaning both crash and stop density sit above the city median; the remaining cells fall into three categories, summarized in Table 18.

Table 18.

Coverage matrix, classifying each cell by whether crash and stop density fall above or below the city median.

Cell category	Cells	Share	Operational meaning
Well-covered (high crash, high stops)	36	58%	Enforcement is where the problem is. Maintain.
Underserved (high crash, low stops)	9	15%	Coverage gap. Targeted enforcement needed.
Light-coverage (low crash, high stops)	8	13%	Possible over-enforcement; review targeting.
Quiet (low crash, low stops)	9	15%	Routine; no specific action.

Table 19 sets out the annual figures. The CAD count captures every crash recorded by dispatch, including parking-lot, private-roadway, and minor crashes, while the official Annual Traffic Analysis counts only the subset that meets state reporting criteria.

Table 19.

Annual traffic metrics, city-only.

Metric	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	5-yr Δ
Crashes (city, CAD)	1,074	1,495	1,648	1,493	1,502	+40%
Crashes (Annual Study)	423	501	497	474	501	+18%
Injury crashes (CAD)	334	593	575	584	528	+58%
Hit-and-run (CAD)	123	135	180	148	154	+25%
Vehicle stops (CAD)	5,406	5,849	5,868	7,797	6,480	+20%
Stops per crash	5.0	3.9	3.6	5.2	4.3	–14%
Impaired-driver calls	124	168	115	91	104	–16%
Reckless-driver calls	101	108	118	105	139	+38%

From this data, it was observed that crashes grew 40 percent in the CAD count and 18 percent in the official study over the period. Vehicle stops grew 20 percent, with a spike to 7,797 in 2023 followed by a reduction to 6,480 in 2024. Citywide enforcement fell from 5.0 to 4.3 stops per crash, though zone-level variation is far wider. Impaired-driver calls fell 16 percent while reckless-driver calls grew 38 percent, most of that growth concentrated in 2024.

Zone V07 was of particular interest. It recorded 595 crashes against only 809 vehicle stops, an enforcement rate of 1.4 stops per crash; less than a third of the city average of 4.4. It also posts the highest hit-and-run rate of any zone at 13.3 percent, the fastest CAD-volume growth in the city at 89 percent since 2020, and the slowest emergency response (its Priority 1 ninetieth-percentile arrival of 14 minutes 56 seconds, as noted above). One location within V07, the Publix at 2438 Laurel Road East, recorded 49 crashes against just 24 stops: a ratio of 0.5. Collectively, V07 has the clearest case for a dedicated traffic allocation.

Figure 26

Vehicle stops per crash by zone

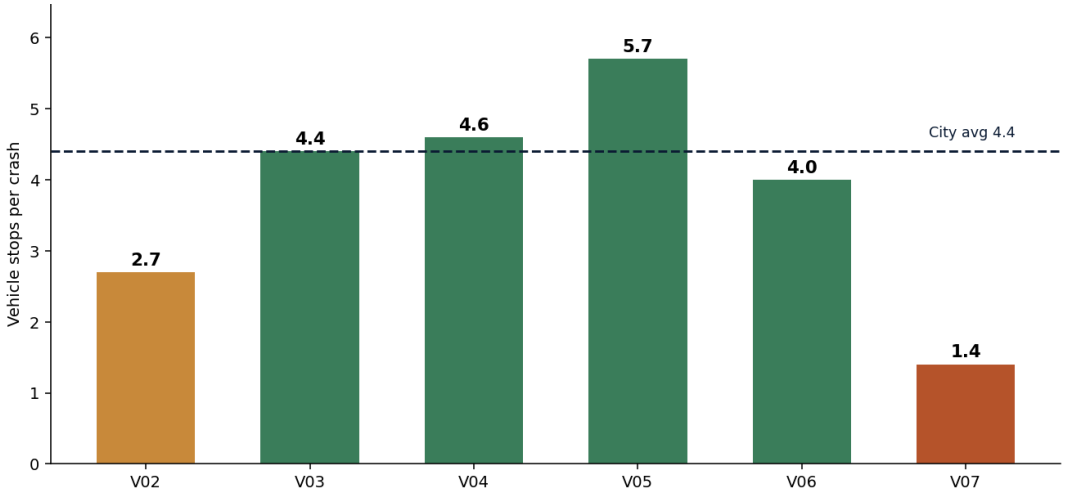


Table 20

Traffic profile by zone, 2020–2024.

Zone	Crashes	Vehicle stops	Stops/crash	% injury	% hit-run	Coverage
V01	11	19	1.7	72.7%	0.0%	Marine — n/a
V02	1,308	3,589	2.7	34.2%	10.4%	Below avg
V03	1,207	5,326	4.4	34.0%	12.0%	At avg
V04	2,094	9,670	4.6	43.0%	9.0%	At avg
V05	1,202	6,885	5.7	36.3%	8.1%	Above avg
V06	731	2,887	4.0	31.9%	11.5%	At avg
V07	595	809	1.4	26.9%	13.3%	Severe gap

The hour-of-day correlation between crashes and vehicle stops was 0.27. In other words, crashes peaked between 13:00 and 14:00, with the single 14:00 hour alone accounting for more than 10 percent of daily crashes, while vehicle stops peaked between 20:00 and 21:00. The midday-to-late-afternoon window (12:00–17:00) holds about half of all crashes but under a quarter of all stops. Shifting some enforcement into the afternoon, concentrated in zones V03, V04, and V07, would capture more than half of weekly crash exposure.

Figure 27

Crashes and vehicle stops by hour of day.

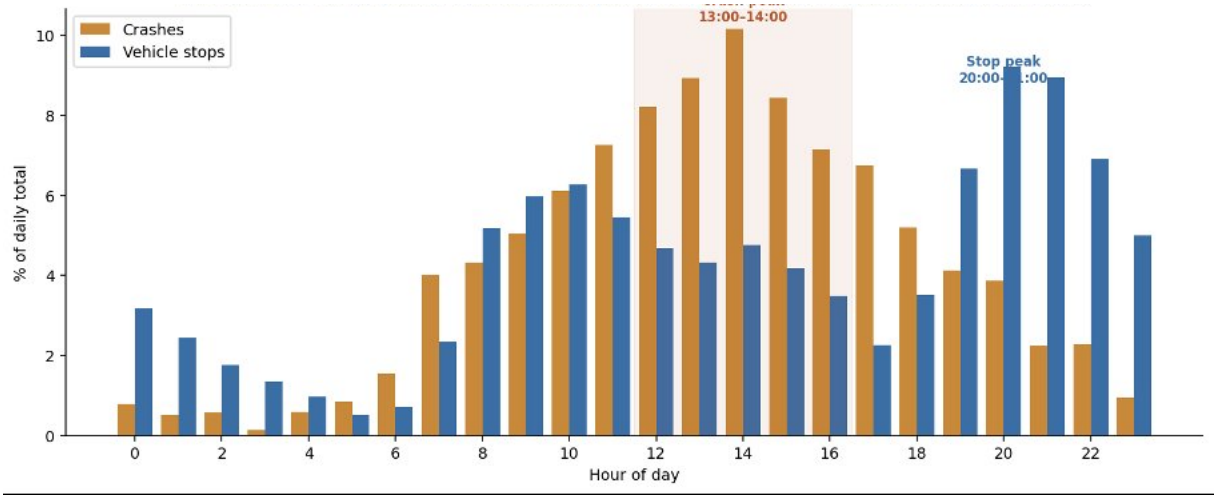


Figure 28

Crash geography in the 13:00–17:00 peak window (left) versus all other hours (right).

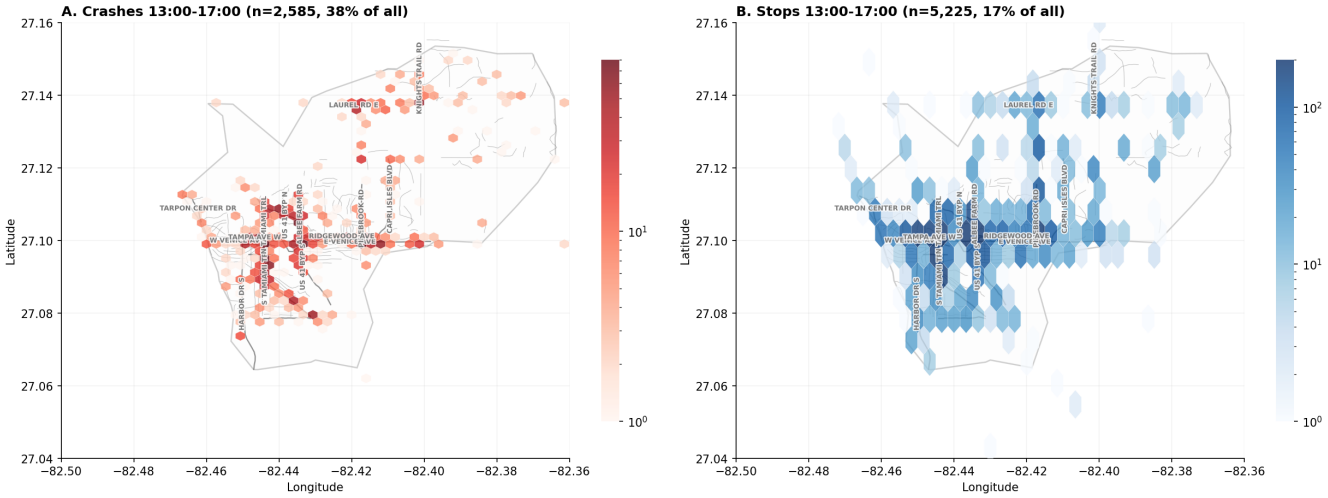


Table 21 lists the ten highest-volume crash intersections over the five years. Note, the two I-75 ramp pairs together recorded 293 crashes; the interstate itself is Florida Highway Patrol jurisdiction, but the local ramp arrivals fall within the City Limits. The leading intersection alone averaged a crash every eight days for five years. Also see Figure 21

Table 21

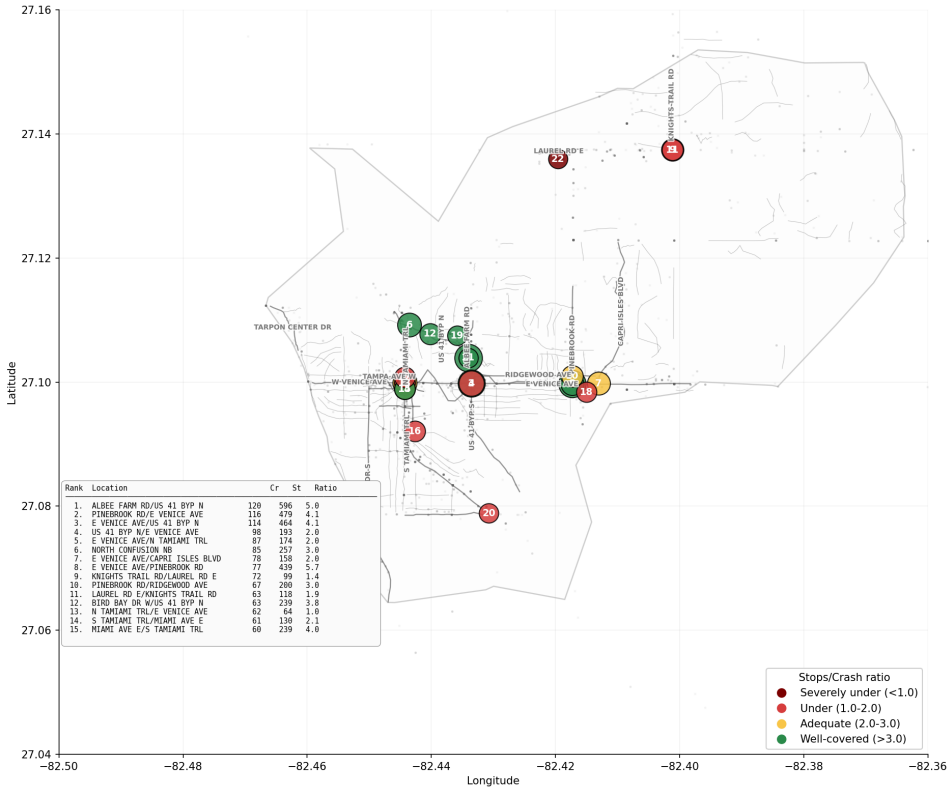
Top ten crash road segments, 2020–2024

Rank	Intersection	Crashes (5 yr)	Approx. frequency
1	Substation Rd / Bird Bay Dr W	241	Every 8 days
2	I-75 Exit 193 / 195 (SB ramps)	163	Every 11 days
3	Pinebrook Rd / Ramsey Rd	158	Every 12 days
4	Albee Farm Rd / US 41 Bypass N	152	Every 12 days
5	Turin St W / Palermo Pl	146	Every 12 days
6	Bird Bay Dr W / N Tamiami Trl	141	Every 13 days
7	Venetian Waterway Pk Trail W / Center Rd	134	Every 14 days
8	I-75 Exit 193 / 195 (NB ramps)	130	Every 14 days
9	Pinebrook Rd / E Venice Ave	116	Every 16 days
10	E Venice Ave / US 41 Bypass N	114	Every 16 days

Note, each entry denotes the nearest intersecting roadways used to geolocate the crash site, and thus represents a road segment or area in the vicinity of that intersection rather than the intersection point itself.

Figure 29.

Top crash locations citywide with enforcement coverage rating.



When considering temporal trends, Friday was the heaviest crash day, at 16.0 percent of weekly crashes with an increase in midday peak, and Sunday the lightest at 10.4 percent. Friday produces about 60 percent more crashes than Saturday despite similar traffic volumes. On severity, 38.4 percent of CAD-recorded crashes over the period involved injury, with the rate highest on the US 41 corridor (V04 at 43 percent), consistent with corridor speeds and access density. Fatal crashes account for 0.4 percent of the total, about six a year with no clear trend.

Table 22

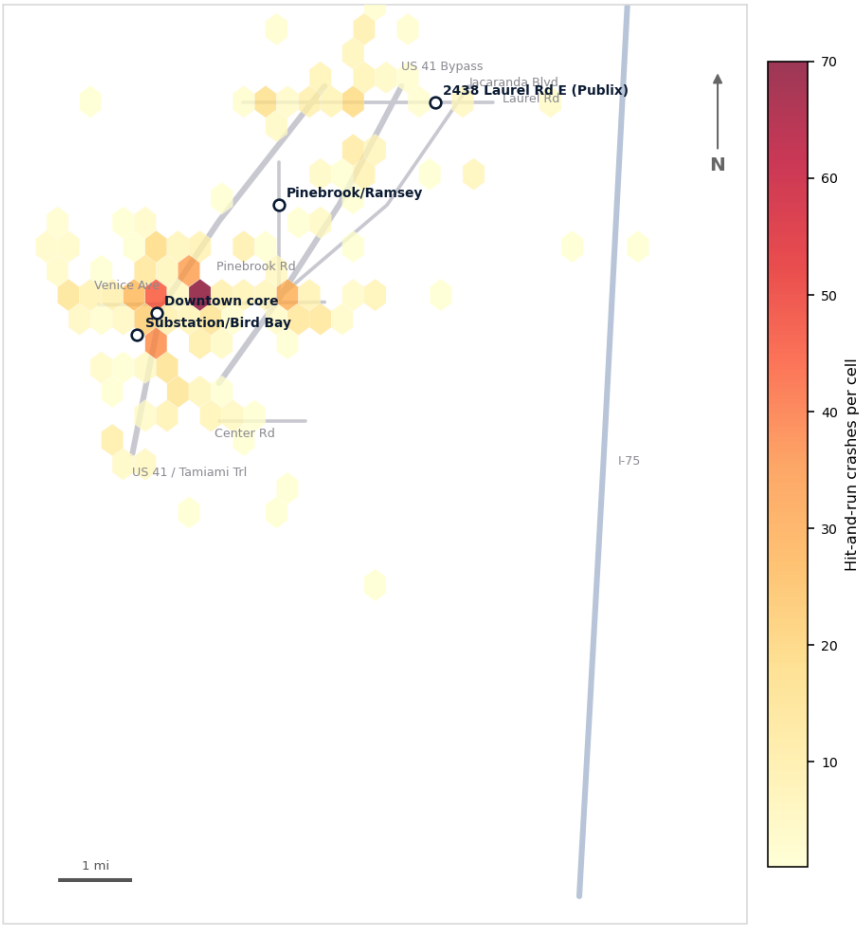
Crash type composition, 2020–2024.

Crash type	5-yr count	% of total
Property damage only	4,317	61.6%
Injury (minor)	1,892	27.0%
Injury (incapacitating)	608	8.7%
Fatal	29	0.4%
Hit-and-run (any severity)	740	10.6%

The citywide hit-and-run rate averaged approximately 9.7 percent, highest in zones V07 (13.3 percent) and V03 (12.0 percent). Dangerous-driver calls (i.e., impaired and reckless combined) totaled 1,401 over the period and clustered on US 41 south of Venice Avenue, the City's primary nightlife area, where the existing late-evening DUI enforcement appeared to be concentrated. The 38 percent growth in reckless-driver calls is distributed across that cluster rather than concentrated at any single point. See Figure 30.

Figure 30

Hit-and-run crash concentration, 2020–2024.



Repeat-Address and Demand Concentration

A small number of addresses generated a disproportionate share of any agency's calls for service. This is a normal feature of policing, and not a sign of dysfunction, but its magnitude in Venice is worth examining, because it identifies the specific locations where modest, property-level engagement can relieve a meaningful amount of patrol workload. The chapter uses two methods to address this point. The first groups CAD records by normalized address to identify named locations with stakeholders for engagement. The second applies DBSCAN spatial clustering at roughly 80-meter resolution to find operational hotspots at the scale at which directed patrol actually deployed. Note, this is a scale that can span several adjacent properties. The reason for this, is that DBSCAN is a density-based clustering method that groups points sitting close together and labels isolated points as unclustered, so it surfaces concentrations of activity without needing the addresses to match exactly.

1. Across the five years, citizen calls came from about 10,300 distinct addresses. The most active handful account for a large share of the total. Notably, the top 10 addresses generate

roughly 10 percent of all citizen calls, the top 25 about 17 percent, and the top 50 about 24 percent. In round terms, the ten busiest addresses alone produce on the order of 80 calls a week, every week. This degree of concentration is typical of a small-to-medium municipality; however, its value is that it pinpoints where intervention has leverage without a significant cost implication. A 25 percent reduction in calls at just the top five locations would remove on the order of a thousand dispatches a year without any change to headcount or shift structure.

Table 23lists the highest-volume locations, with the share of each location's calls that were high-priority (Priority 1 or 2) and the share that generated a case. Reading the three columns together separates locations that are busy from locations that are operationally heavy.

Table 23.

Top community locations by five-year call volume.

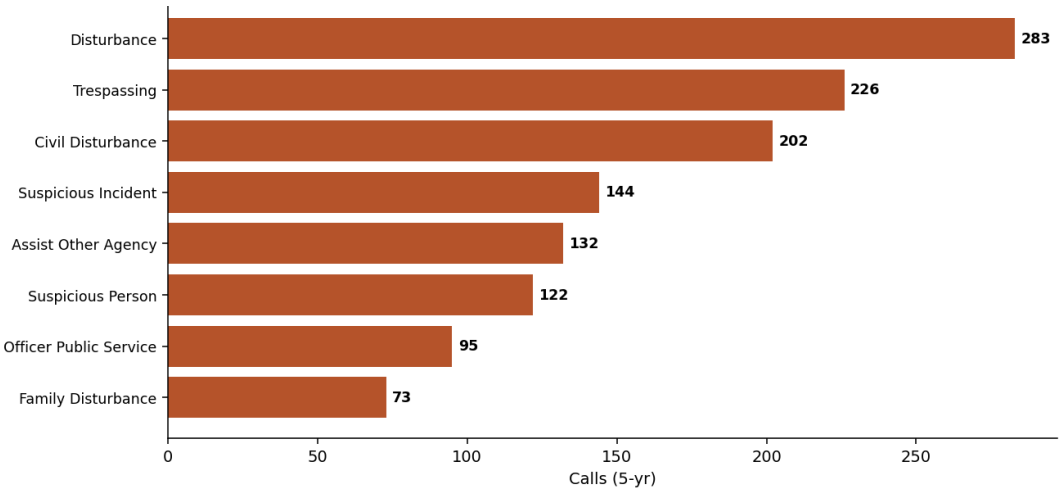
Rank	Location	Calls (5 yr)	High-priority %	Case %
1	Legacy Park, E Venice Ave	4,480	18.8%	2.3%
2	South Jetty	3,359	12.2%	0.4%
3	TJ Maxx, 450 US 41 Bypass N	2,393	33.3%	2.8%
4	Publix, 1445 E Venice Ave	1,681	34.0%	4.2%
5	The Venetian at Capri Isles	1,423	74.3%	6.0%
6	Motel 6, 281 US 41 Bypass N	1,149	96.5%	14.2%
7	Venice Regional Medical Center	877	64.5%	9.4%
8	Walmart, 4150 S Tamiami Trail*	812	28.4%	3.1%
9	Centennial Park, W Venice Ave	745	14.8%	1.5%
10	Sarasota Memorial Hospital (Venice)	698	52.6%	7.8%

*outside of the city limits.

It is important to highlight that parks and waterfront locations sit at the top by raw volume but are mostly low-acuity (e.g., Legacy Park and the South Jetty are busy with parking, suspicious-person, and lost-property calls rather than emergencies). Commercial locations such as TJ Maxx, Publix, and Walmart (noting, this sits outside of Venice's jurisdiction) fall in the middle with moderate high-priority rates, driven by retail theft and disturbances. And one location in particular appeared to drive a high volume of calls: the Motel 6 at 281 US 41 Bypass North, where about 96 percent of calls are high-priority and roughly one in seven generates a case. See Figure 31

Figure 31

Call composition at 281 US 41 Bypass N (Motel 6).



The Motel 6 at 281 US 41 Bypass North was the single most disorder-intensive location in the City. Around 96 percent of its calls are high-priority and the calls were dominated by disturbances, trespassing, civil disputes, suspicious activity, and welfare and family-disturbances. These are high-acuity calls that typically require more than one officer and frequently produce a report, an arrest, or a referral to social services. Combined with the adjacent hotel at 425 US 41 Bypass North (about 730 calls, 93 percent high-priority), this single stretch of frontage consumes an estimated 4,500 to 5,000 officer-hours over the five years.

Locations like this respond well to a problem-oriented approach. Targeted property engagement has produced call reductions of 30 to 50 percent at comparable properties elsewhere. The package usually combines a direct conversation with property management about environmental-design changes (lighting, sightlines, access control), engagement with code enforcement on any contributing violations, and coordination with county social services.

Clustering the disorder-call records (e.g., disturbances, battery, theft, suspicious-person, trespassing, and family disturbances) at roughly 80-meter resolution identified 135 distinct hotspots over the five years. Table 24 shows the largest. Because the clustering aggregates adjacent properties and frontage, its counts run higher than the strict address-level figures. For instance, Motel 6 absorbs the adjacent hotel and surrounding parking that the address-level count keeps separate. Both views are useful as (1) the address view provides details for stakeholder engagement, and (2) the cluster view aids future deployment planning.

Table 24

Top disorder clusters by five-year call volume (DBSCAN).

Rank	Anchor location	5-yr calls	Top call type
1	Motel 6 / hotel (281 US 41 Byp N)	5,277	Suspicious person

Rank	Anchor location	5-yr calls	Top call type
2	Publix shopping ctr (535 S Tamiami)	2,093	Suspicious person
3	TJ Carneys area (231 W Venice Ave)	1,997	Suspicious person
4	7-Eleven (1240 E Venice Ave)	698	Suspicious person
5	Big Lots (565 US 41 Byp N)	534	Suspicious person
6	Venice Beach (101 N The Esplanade)	391	Suspicious person
7	Venetian at Capri Isles	381	Family disturbance
8	Publix E Venice (1445 E Venice)	322	Suspicious person
9	Gulf Breeze Condos (340 Base Ave E)	283	Family disturbance
10	Sharky's on the Pier	275	Disturbance

Repeat calls also appear to come from false alarms. Island Village Montessori at 2001 Pinebrook Road generated 577 alarm calls over the five years. At roughly 12 minutes and two units per alarm, the pattern represents on the order of 220 officer-hours, almost all of it avoidable through community engagement. Next, by ranking the share of high-priority calls, rather than raw volume, provides an operational distinct set of locations. After excluding addresses with fewer than 200 calls over the period, Table 25 shows where calls are not just frequent but serious.

Table 25.

Top locations by high-priority call rate (addresses with at least 200 five-year calls).

Rank	Location	Calls (5 yr)	High-priority %	P1 %
1	Motel 6, 281 US 41 Bypass N	1,149	96.5%	84.2%
2	The Venetian at Capri Isles	1,423	74.3%	46.8%
3	Venice Regional Medical Center	877	64.5%	38.1%
4	Sarasota Memorial Hospital (Venice)	698	52.6%	30.2%
5	Venice Mobile Home Park	462	48.2%	26.5%
6	7-Eleven, US 41 Bypass N	420	42.5%	22.8%
7	Island Pharmacy / CVS, US 41	512	38.2%	19.5%
8	Publix, 1445 E Venice Ave	1,681	34.0%	15.5%
9	TJ Maxx, 450 US 41 Bypass N	2,393	33.3%	15.0%
10	Walmart, 4150 S Tamiami Trail	812	28.4%	12.2%

Demand Reduction and a Minimum-Staffing Model

Earlier sections measured the Department as it operates today. This section looks forward, and it does so in a deliberate order. First, it asks how much call demand can be removed at little or no cost by acting on the concentrated problems already identified (e.g., the repeat-disorder properties, the false-alarm outliers, the crash hotspots). Then, with that reduced demand in view, it looks toward a guaranteed minimum on every shift, a new mid-shift covering the busiest hours, and a dedicated traffic unit. As with all modelling, these are planning estimates with stated assumptions and are therefore not guarantees.

As discussed above, addressing repeat-locations, using the problem-oriented method (e.g., property-management engagement, environmental design, code enforcement, coordination with social-services) can potentially cut calls by 25 to 50 percent at such sites. For instance, addressing false alarms tackles the alarm outliers (e.g., Island Village Montessori's 577 alarm calls) where a system can be put in place to remove most of the dispatches. When considered collectively, the effect is on the order of 1,000 fewer citizen dispatches a year and about 1,400 freed officer-hours (i.e., roughly 11 percent of 2024 citizen-call volume, and close to the full annual productive capacity of one patrol officer). There are two key points to this. First, there is little fiscal requirement to engage with community leaders about hot-spot locations in an attempt to mitigate these dispatch requirements. In plain terms, this work buys back close to one officer and places that officer where the need is greatest, before any hiring decision is made.

Next, it is important to consider hiring needs and shift allocations. JSG's proposed design rests on the assumption that demand is not flat across the day. About 71 percent of citizen calls arrive during the day shift, the busiest hours run from late morning to early evening, and crashes peak in that same window. A traditional dual day/night split staffs 14:00 no more heavily than 04:00, which leaves the afternoon thin. The model corrects this with four elements – see Table 26

Table 26.

The proposed minimum-staffing design. On-duty strength is officers working a shift, not total roster headcount.

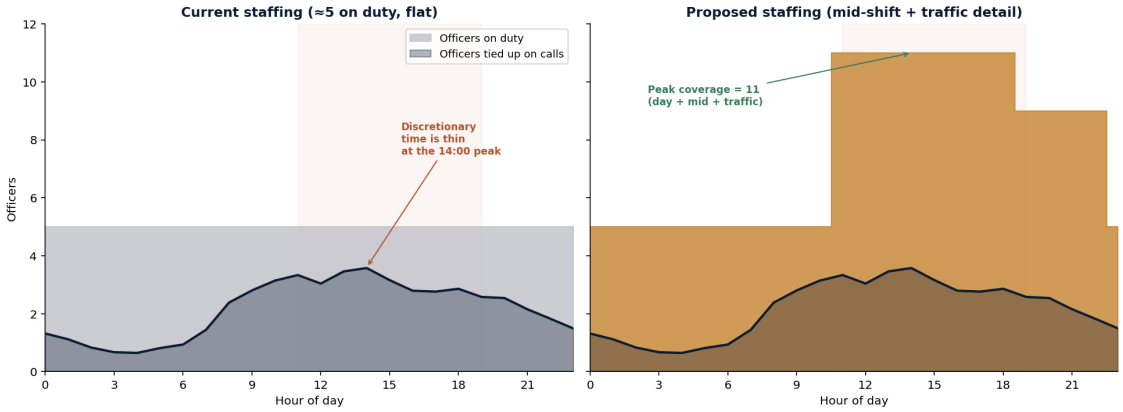
Element	On-duty strength	Hours covered
Day shift	4 officers + 1 supervisor	07:00–19:00
Mid shift (new)	3 officers + 1 supervisor	11:00–23:00
Night shift	4 officers + 1 supervisor	19:00–07:00

Element	On-duty strength	Hours covered
Traffic detail (new)	2 officers[7]	11:00–19:00 (peak)

To see whether this design fits the work, Figure 32 places officers on duty and demand on a single scale. The key idea is that the dark band shows how many officers are, on average, tied up handling citizen calls (the 2024 call volume converted to concurrent officers, allowing for the 1.96 units that respond to a typical call). The space between that band and the top of the staffing area is discretionary time. In other words, the capacity available for traffic enforcement, hotspot engagement, jail runs, follow-up, and community work. A department with almost no gap is purely reactive; a department with a healthy gap can be more proactive.

Figure 32

Officers on duty (shaded area) against officers tied up on calls (dark band), by hour, 2024. Left: current strength. Right: proposed model.

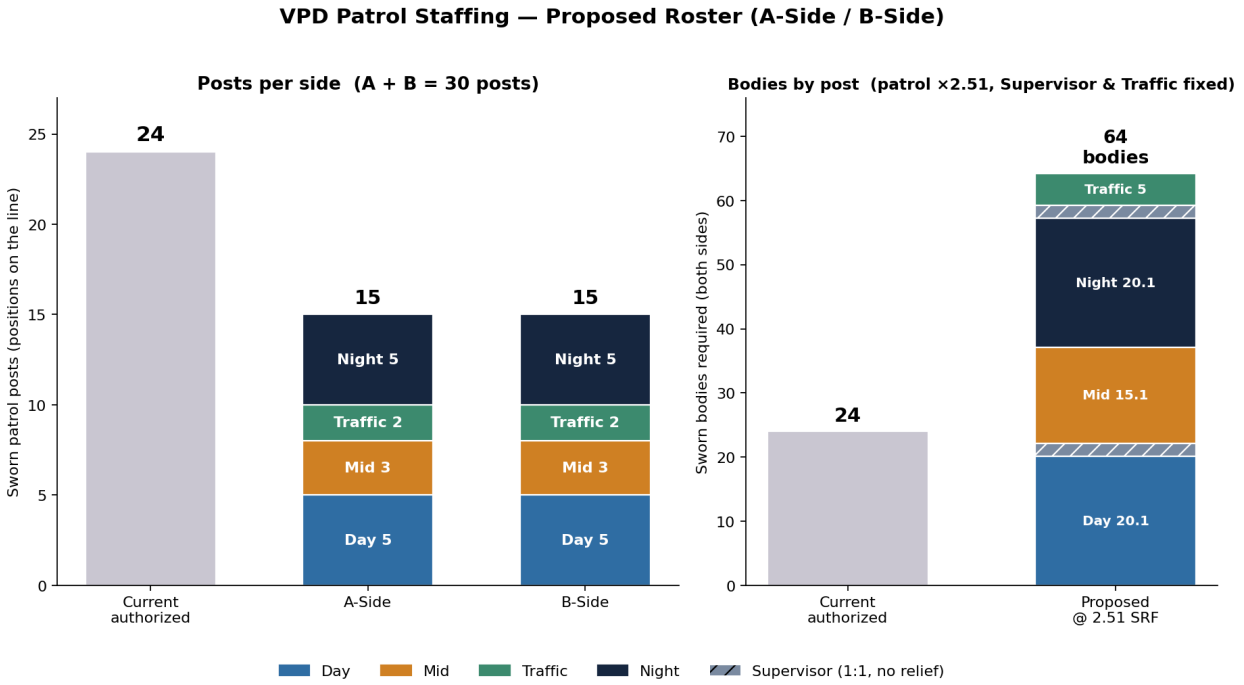


Under the current strength of about five on duty[8] (left panel), committed call-handling time climbs to roughly 3.6 officers at the 14:00 peak, leaving only a small discretionary capacity in the hours when proactive work would have the most impact. The proposed model (right panel) lifts on-duty strength to eleven across the 11:00-19:00 window, where day shift, mid-shift, and traffic detail overlap. Next, it then steps down to nine in the evening and five overnight. The staffing now follows the shape of demand, whereby the discretionary gap is widest exactly when demand and crash risk are highest, which is what maintains proactive enforcement. As discussed earlier, the shift-relief factor of 2.51 officers suggests a current patrol need of approximately 40 officers. This is shown in Figure 33.

Figure 33

[7] Note, this includes the 2 officers already assigned to traffic.
[8] Note, the qualitative analyses suggested on average VPD currently operated on a 3+1, and not 4+1.

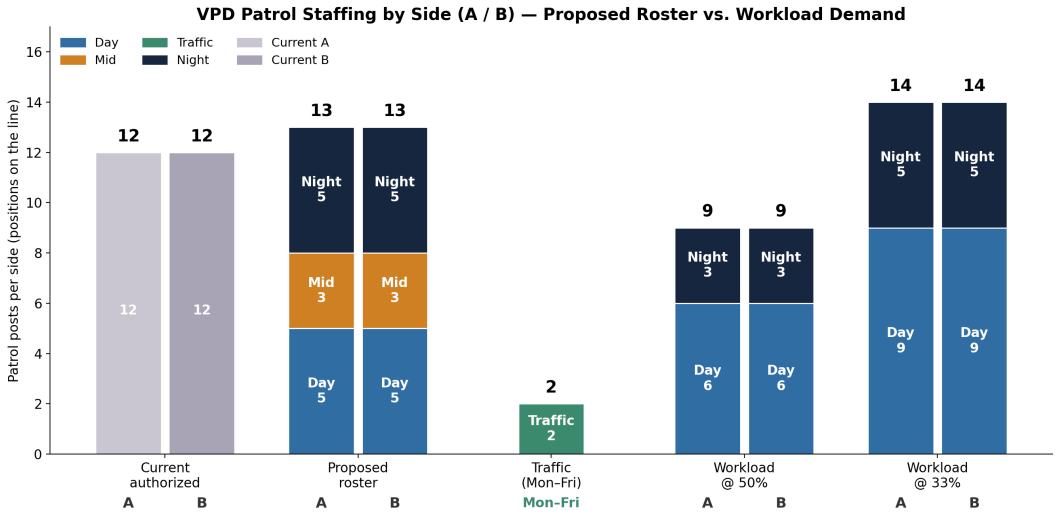
Sworn patrol roster required by the proposed model, against current authorization, with the relief factor of 2.51 applied to each shift line.



Note, traffic detail sits as weekday unit only

Figure 34

Sworn patrol roster modelled against a community-oriented vs. response orientated approach, based on Wilson & Weiss.



Traffic operates as a single standalone unit Monday–Friday, separate from the rotating A/B shifts, and is not duplicated per side. Workload per-side figures are the department total split A/B with half-posts rounded up (50%: 6 day + 3 night; 33%: 9 day + 5 night).

In plain terms, the model requires a sworn patrol roster of about 40, against the 24 currently authorized; a net increase of roughly 16 positions. It is essential to be clear about what that number is. Notably it is not the workload minimum. The Wilson and Weiss research found citizen-call demand alone justifies about 17 patrol slots at the baseline objective and 26 at the community-policing objective. The 40-officer figure is larger because it funds three things the workload minimum does not. It seeks to support a safety floor on every shift, an entirely new mid-shift, and a standing traffic detail. In other words, it buys coverage, resilience against simultaneous calls, and dedicated proactive capacity, rather than just enough officers to keep the queue from backing up. It sits near the community-policing end as discussed earlier, expanded for the mid-shift and traffic functions, and it is broadly consistent with the upper reach of Chief Thorpe's ten-year growth target once non-patrol roles are included.

With this in mind, these forecasts do depend on assumptions that the Council can and should test. The demand-reduction figures assume engagement reaches only the conservative end of the published range, and real results vary by property and must be measured against each location's baseline. The staffing model holds the relief factor at the 2024 value of 2.51; if leave use keeps climbing, for instance, the factor rises and the roster needed for the same on-duty strength rises with it. The demand curve is the 2024 curve and does not yet include the population growth projected by the City, which itself raises the requirement over time. And the on-duty floors are a policy choice about minimum coverage and officer safety, not a workload calculation.

Appendix A. Venice Police Department Staffing and Organizational Efficiency Study

Qualitative Methodology

Overview

The qualitative component of this study examined how the people who work in, oversee, partner with, and depend on the Venice Police Department understand its structure, workload, supervision, and future needs. It used a semi-structured interview and focus group design, applied across the full range of internal and external stakeholders, and analyzed through a mixed inductive and deductive process. The purpose was twofold: to surface the themes that stakeholders themselves raised, and to provide the practical context in which the quantitative workload findings should be read. A central aim was to understand the type and quality of policing the community experiences and expects, including how residents, businesses, partners, and officials describe the department's service style and what they value in it. These expectations are not incidental to a staffing study. Stakeholder expectations about how officers spend uncommitted time, about seasonal demand, and about the level and style of service the community wants to inform the performance objective that drives the patrol staffing estimate, so the qualitative findings are not a separate narrative but an input to the staffing analysis itself.

Data Collection

A four-person team from Jones Solution Group conducted the sessions across a pre-site phase and a four-day on-site visit to the Venice Police Department in April 2026. The team comprised the principal investigator and three consultants with operational law enforcement and research backgrounds, which allowed interviewers to be matched to stakeholder type.

The analyzed corpus consists of 40 primary sessions, conducted 22 individual interviews and 18 focus groups, together with three analyst-authored synthesis documents. Sessions spanned eight stakeholder groupings: sworn personnel, civilian staff, city management, other city departments, the City Council, the Mayor, partner agencies, and the community. Within these groupings, sessions reached a range of subgroups, including, among sworn personnel, command staff, lieutenants, patrol supervisors, sergeants, patrol shift personnel, detectives, and specialized units, with comparable internal range across the civilian, city, and community groupings.

All sessions followed a common interview and focus group guide that organized questions by theme and used a question promote with interviewers free to follow probes as topics developed. The guide contained question sets tailored to particular groups and, in some cases, to specific subgroups, so that framing reflected each stakeholder's vantage while a shared thematic spine ran throughout. Within that structure, interviewees and focus group participants were encouraged to expand on the matters most important to them and were given latitude to share their experiences and insights, so that the most significant themes could emerge through a grounded and organic process rather than being confined to the questions asked. At the outset of each session, the team

stated the study's independent purpose, made clear that the session was not an evaluation of any individual, and obtained permission to record. Participants were told that their statements would not be attributed to them by name without their explicit consent.

Source Types and Weighting

The corpus distinguishes primary sources from synthesis documents. Primary sources are the interview and focus group transcripts and the contemporaneous session notes. Synthesis documents are three secondary summaries the team produced to consolidate primary material: two drawn from patrol sessions and one from civilian operations. Primary sources carry the analytic weight. The synthesis documents were used to confirm that the team's contemporaneous reading matched the primary record and to point to material warranting closer attention; they were not counted as independent sources, because each condenses primary sessions already in the corpus and counting both would represent the same voices twice.

The patrol shift sessions, in particular, were treated as strong primary evidence on their own terms, as independent multi-participant focus groups conducted across separate shifts in the area of the department most directly affected by the study. The focus groups covered four patrol shift briefings across the collection period and produced strong interaction among shift members. They included personnel temporarily reassigned to patrol from specialty units to meet minimum staffing requirements, which broadened the range of experience represented in the patrol findings.

Analytic Approach

Analysis followed a grounded inductive pass followed by structured deductive checks. In the first pass, the team derived themes directly from the transcripts, session notes, and synthesis documents, with the interview guide, the contract scope of work, and prior project deliverables all set aside, so that themes reflected what stakeholders emphasized rather than what the study anticipated.

The review process was structured to ensure that no theme rested on a single interviewer's interpretation. Sessions conducted remotely were captured and read by the primary interviewer and then reviewed by at least two additional team members. On-site sessions were conducted and reviewed by the interviewing member, discussed and debriefed by the team at the conclusion of each day's sessions, and then read and reviewed by additional members. In total, every session document was read and reviewed by at least two team members, and all four team members participated in the debriefings. Final theme development drew on the sessions that had been reviewed by multiple interviewers and vetted by two members before being shared with the full team for review, distinguishing the initial collection and reporting of each session from the later, collective development of themes. A finding was treated as a theme when it appeared across more than one session or source and reflected a consistent position rather than an isolated comment. Findings arising from a single source were retained and reported as such, identified as isolated or single-source observations, so that the analysis preserved the range of views rather than reducing them to points of agreement.

After the grounded pass, the emergent themes were tested against two reference frames. They were compared against the interview guide to separate themes that had been prompted by the questions from those that arose unbidden, the latter carrying additional weight, and to interpret whether differences across groups reflected genuine divergence or the effect of differently framed questions. They were then tested against the contract scope of work to identify where the findings aligned with the contracted areas of inquiry, where they exposed gaps, and where they sat in tension with the stated scope. Prior project deliverables were consulted only after these checks and only as reference material. Where a grounded finding complicated, contradicted, or qualified prior work, it was surfaced explicitly with its supporting evidence and a recommendation on whether revision was warranted.

Triangulation and Theme Strength

Theme strength was anchored in triangulation, assessed at two levels. The first level is convergence across the eight stakeholder groupings; a theme raised independently by, for example, several different city departments alongside the department's own personnel was more strongly corroborated than one heard within a single grouping. The second is convergence within a grouping across its functional and rank subgroups, for example a theme raised by patrol line personnel, patrol sergeants, and command staff alike, or by patrol, detectives, and specialized units alike. A theme that converged across groupings, or that climbed the subgroup structure within a grouping, was rated as more strongly corroborated than one confined to a single subgroup.

Vertical position within a grouping was treated as carrying meaning in its own right, independent of breadth. Some concerns are visible only from particular vantage points: matters of succession, command span of control, and organizational structure are most clearly seen from the command level, while the texture of shift-level workload is most clearly seen by line personnel. Such themes were read as vantage-specific findings rather than as weak ones, and were not discounted for failing to appear across other subgroups.

Each theme was characterized along three dimensions: the breadth of its triangulation, the salience with which stakeholders emphasized it, and whether the quantitative analysis is anticipated to support, qualify, or remain to be determined against it. The breadth of a theme and the degree to which it was contested were tracked as separate matters, so that a theme could be both widely held and genuinely disputed. Strong themes, broadly triangulated and well supported, were clearly distinguished from tentative themes that were narrowly supported but worth recording, to guard against elevating thin findings into major conclusions. The anticipated quantitative corroboration dimension was applied only to themes empirically testable against the calls-for-service and records-management data, such as response time, seasonal demand, workload distribution, discretionary time, and zone-level differences. Themes that could not be tested against the data, such as those concerning morale or internal communication, were assessed on cross-group convergence and salience alone and are identified as such.

Divergence

Where stakeholder groups or subgroups understood the same matter differently, the divergence was recorded as a finding rather than reconciled into a single position. Divergence was classified by cause where a cause could be identified: divergence of vantage, where groups see different parts of the organization; divergence of interest, where a matter affects groups differently; and divergence between perception and the record, where a stakeholder view may not match what the data show. Where no clear cause applied, the difference was presented as a genuine difference in perspective without being forced into a category. Divergences between stakeholder perception and the observable data were flagged specifically for comparison against the quantitative analysis, as these are the points the integrated findings are positioned to resolve.

Confidentiality

No individual is named in the findings. Statements are attributed at the most general level that still conveys the relevant vantage point, by role and rank within a grouping, such as patrol officers, patrol sergeants, command staff, civilian records staff, or council members. Where a subgroup is small enough that a role label would identify the speaker, attribution is raised to the grouping level. This convention honors the assurance given to participants and supports the candor on which the study depends.

Limitations

The qualitative findings represent the perspectives of those interviewed during a defined collection period and are shaped by who was available to participate. As with any interview-based work, the analysis reflects what stakeholders chose to share and how they framed it. The themes are most reliable where they converge across independent sources and where the quantitative analysis can test them; they are most tentative where they rest on a single source or on perception alone. These limitations are the reason the qualitative findings are presented alongside the quantitative analysis rather than in place of it, and the reason the strength of each theme is characterized rather than asserted.

Appendix B - Peer Comparison Methodology and Selection Framework

Why a Structured Peer Set Matters

Police staffing decisions are frequently challenged on the basis of comparison group selection. A common challenge raised in council deliberations is whether the chosen peers are truly comparable, or whether the analysis has been engineered to support a predetermined conclusion. To anticipate and answer that challenge before it arises, this study has applied a transparent four-criteria inclusion framework and a four-criteria exclusion framework to a candidate pool of more than twenty Florida coastal municipalities. The resulting peer set consists of eight cities, each documented as meeting all four inclusion criteria and clearing all four exclusion filters.

Cities considered and not selected are documented with their specific exclusion rationale, ensuring that the methodology is reproducible and that any city not appearing in the final peer set has a recorded reason for omission.

Peer Selection Criteria

Inclusion Criteria (All Four Required)

To be included in the peer comparison set, a candidate municipality must satisfy all four of the following criteria. Failure to meet any one criterion disqualifies the candidate from inclusion.

1. **Independent Municipal Police Department.** The candidate must operate its own municipal police department with its own command structure, budget, and staffing authority. Cities served by sheriff contracts are operationally distinct and not directly comparable for staffing-ratio purposes.
2. **Florida Coastal or Near-Coastal Municipality.** The candidate must be located on or adjacent to a Florida coastline, sharing the regulatory environment, demographic patterns, and tourism economy that distinguish Florida coastal policing from inland or out-of-state policing contexts.
3. **Documented Seasonal Population Dynamics.** The candidate must show measurable seasonal-resident population fluctuation, evidenced by Census ACS Table B25004 (Vacancy Status) data showing seasonal, recreational, or occasional-use housing units constituting a meaningful share of total housing stock.
4. **Tourism or Special-Event Draw.** The candidate must have a documented tourism or special-event profile that creates non-resident workload pressure on the police department, evidenced by county Tourist Development Council reporting, lodging tax revenues, or recurring large-scale events.

Exclusion Filters

Even when a candidate satisfies all four inclusion criteria, certain conditions create operational confounds that disqualify the candidate from comparison. Four exclusion filters are applied:

- **Golden City Filter.** Any candidate with a Zillow Home Value Index (ZHVI) at or above $1 million, or closer to $1 million than to Venice's ZHVI of approximately $450,000, is excluded. Cities at this property-value tier exhibit wealth-protective enclave characteristics, atypical demographic flows, and operational profiles that do not generalize to mainstream Florida coastal municipalities.
- **Hurricane Rebuilding Confound.** Any candidate currently undergoing significant post-hurricane rebuilding is excluded, because recent staffing data from such cities reflects rebuilding-driven anomalies rather than steady-state operational demand.
- **Scale Mismatch.** Any candidate substantially larger than Venice in permanent population, such that ratio-based comparisons would be distorted, is excluded. This filter screens out major metropolitan areas.
- **Military or Special-Jurisdiction Confound.** Any candidate adjacent to a major military installation, federal property, or other special-jurisdiction overlay creating atypical demographic and jurisdictional patterns is excluded.

The Eight Peer Cities

Application of the inclusion criteria and exclusion filters to the candidate pool of Florida coastal municipalities produced the following peer set. Venice serves as the anchor city, and eight cities are identified as direct peers. All nine cities are independent municipalities operating their own police departments, all are coastal or near-coastal, all show documented seasonal population dynamics, and all have substantial tourism profiles.

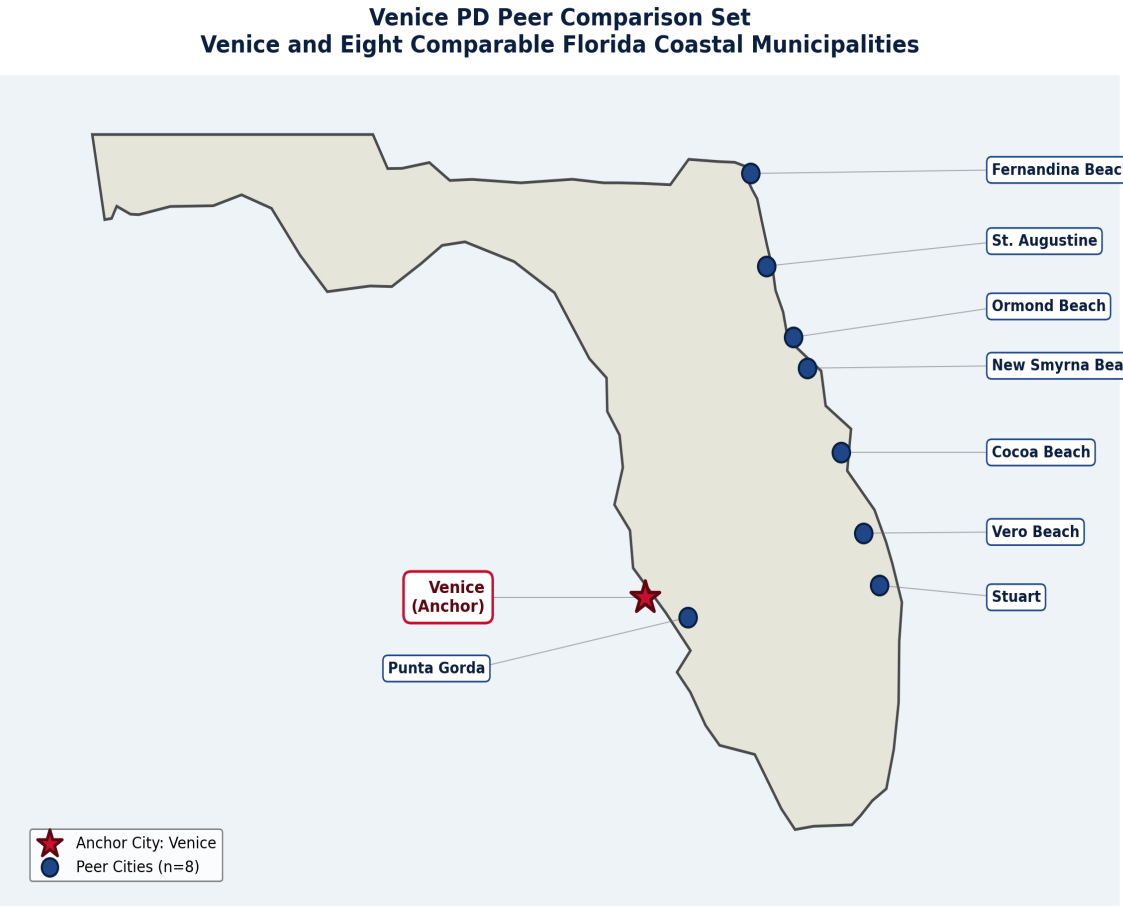


Figure 1. Geographic distribution of Venice and the eight peer cities across the Florida coastline.

Peer City Profiles

City	County	Permanent Population	Median Age	Sworn Officers
Venice (Anchor)	Sarasota	32,053	69.2	55
Punta Gorda	Charlotte	20,278	66.3	49
Cocoa Beach	Brevard	11,386	59.2	41
Fernandina Beach	Nassau	13,420	58.6	43
New Smyrna Beach	Volusia	31,974	57.8	57
Ormond Beach	Volusia	43,976	53.6	71
Vero Beach	Indian River	17,556	52.5	55

City	County	Permanent Population	Median Age	Sworn Officers
St. Augustine	St. Johns	15,351	49.9	62
Stuart	Martin	18,058	48.6	~50

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau ACS 2024 5-Year Estimates (population, median age); agency-published staffing data (sworn officers). Stuart total sworn count is preliminary, pending agency confirmation.

Cities Considered and Excluded

The following candidate cities were evaluated against the inclusion criteria and exclusion filters but were not selected for the peer set. The specific exclusion rationale is documented for each:

City Considered	Exclusion Rationale
Dunedin	Sheriff jurisdiction. Dunedin disbanded its municipal police department in 1995 and contracts with the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office. Fails Inclusion Criterion 1 (independent municipal police department).
Destin	Sheriff jurisdiction. Destin contracts with the Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office at $3.3 million annually for 21 deputy positions. Fails Inclusion Criterion 1 (independent municipal police department).
Fort Walton Beach	Military confound. Adjacency to Eglin Air Force Base and Hurlburt Field creates atypical demographic flows, traffic patterns, and jurisdictional overlap with the Uniform Code of Military Justice. Fails Exclusion Filter 4 (military or special-jurisdiction confound).
Fort Myers Beach	Hurricane rebuilding confound. Ongoing post-Hurricane Ian rebuilding makes recent staffing data ungeneralizable. Fails Exclusion Filter 2.
Marco Island	Golden City. Zillow Home Value Index of approximately $898,000 places this community in the wealth-protective enclave tier. Fails Exclusion Filter 1.
Indian Rocks Beach	Golden City. Zillow Home Value Index of approximately $900,000. Fails Exclusion Filter 1.

City Considered	Exclusion Rationale
St. Pete Beach	Golden City. Zillow Home Value Index of approximately $706,000, closer to $1 million than to Venice's $450,000. Fails Exclusion Filter 1.
Miami, Orlando, Jacksonville, Boca Raton	Scale mismatch. Permanent populations of these cities range from approximately 100,000 to 950,000, several multiples of Venice's 32,000. Comparative ratios are distorted at this scale. Fails Exclusion Filter 3.