

**AGENDA FOR THE  
ENGLEWOOD CITY COUNCIL  
STUDY SESSION  
MONDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2014  
COMMUNITY ROOM  
6:00 P.M.**



- I. Drug Task Force Update**  
Police Chief Collins and members of the command staff will be present to provide an update on the Drug Task force.
- II. Police Hot Topics – 6:10 p.m.**  
Police Chief Collins and members of the command staff will be present to discuss police hot topics.
- III. Citizen Survey – Police/Public Safety – 6:50 p.m.**
- IV. City Manager’s Choice.**
- V. City Attorney’s Choice.**

Please Note: If you have a disability and need auxiliary aids or services, please notify the City of Englewood, 303-762-2407, at least 48 hours in advance of when services are needed. Thank you.

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Chief Collins

**FROM:** Commander Sam Watson  
Sergeant Martin  
Sergeant Contos  
Sergeant Fender

**DATE:** September 17, 2014

**SUBJECT:** Council Request 14-184 (Update on Safety/Drug Task Force)

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**Council Request:** 14-184  
**Assigned to:** Commander Watson  
**Date Assigned:** September 17, 2014  
**Information regarding illegal drug issues and other crime "Hot Spots" in the City of Englewood**

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Currently, the Multi-Jurisdictional Arapahoe County Impact Team (MJACIT) is responsible for the investigation of illegal drug and narcotics cases in Arapahoe County, to include the City of Englewood. In addition to these duties, this team is also responsible for the investigation of pattern crimes throughout the county (including Englewood). Currently, the Englewood Police Department has two members assigned to MJACIT (a sergeant and an investigator).

The Chiefs and Sheriffs of the law enforcement agencies within Arapahoe County have determined that a dedicated task force focusing only on illegal drugs and narcotics cases will be beneficial in combating the increased illegal drug and narcotics cases throughout the county (prior to 2012, illegal drug cases were handled by the now disbanded South Metro Drug Task Force). As of today, this new drug task force is not yet operational – the involved entities are in the process of assigning personnel, working through administrative issues, and reviewing the Intergovernmental Agreement. The staffing levels of the new task force are still being determined but will likely have 12 members (two of which will be from the Englewood Police Department).

When the new drug task force is operational, the mission will be to:

- Decrease the availability of illegal drugs in the areas served by the task force.
- Provide a deterrent to the trafficking of illegal drugs by increasing the risk of detection, apprehension, prosecution and conviction.
- Decrease the profitability of drug trafficking through seizure and forfeiture of illegally obtained items and currency.
- Coordinate and cooperate with other local, state and federal agencies to help reduce drug availability on a state, multi-state and national level.

- Coordinate and cooperate with other local, state and federal agencies to identify illegal drug activity that may involve other pattern crimes and ensure that these activities are thoroughly investigated and/or referred to the appropriate agency.

Most of the illegal drug cases the Englewood Police Department usually encounters involve methamphetamine, to include the possession and distribution of this substance. The city continues to see methamphetamine as the most prevalent illegal drug; however, over the past four years we have seen an increase in heroin possession cases. This is likely due to the abuse of prescription opiates, which over time often leads to the use of heroin as a less expensive and easier obtained alternative.

Below is a breakdown of heroin cases in Englewood.

	<u>Total Cases</u>
• 2010	1
• 2011	6
• 2012	15
• 2013	28
• 2014 (to date)	19

Below is a breakdown of total felony drug arrests in the city of Englewood. This breakdown includes all felony cases (Schedule I, II, III, IV and V).

	<u>Total Cases</u>
• 2010	72
• 2011	96
• 2012	118
• 2013	125
• 2014	75 (through July of 2014)

(Currently our reporting system does not allow these cases to be broken down by specific drug type.)

The increased use of heroin and opiate-based prescription drugs throughout Arapahoe County and all county municipalities has resulted in an increase in overdose deaths related to the abuse of those substances. Since 2012, Englewood has had 12 heroin-related overdose deaths. In 2013, there was a total of 17 drug-related overdose deaths (six of those from heroin). Year-to-date for 2014, there has been a total of 13 drug-related overdose deaths (four of those from heroin).

Additionally, since South Metro Drug Task Force was disbanded, the number of distribution cases submitted to the DA's office has decreased dramatically (while at the same time drug arrests have increased). Distribution cases are those incidents in which the suspect was arrested for distributing the drugs, not just possessing the drugs.

In regards to the homeless/transient population and their involvement in illegal drug cases, it is not possible to give statistical data on their involvement. It is apparent, however, that they are more likely

to be involved in the possession (rather than distribution) of illegal drugs and that they often abuse alcohol and drugs as a means to deal with other underlying issues such as mental illness.

In regards for information on crime trends/hot spots in the city, the following is a description of areas that have been identified (by crime analysis) as high calls for service and high crime areas and are receiving specific and ongoing attention by the police.

1. **CityCenter Englewood area** - This area is experiencing an unusually high number of crime and quality of life concerns related to criminal activity associated with the homeless/transient population. Since the City of Denver began an aggressive push to rid its parks of homeless people, the RTD light rail station and adjacent RTD bus depot have allowed transients to move out of Denver and into the first-tier suburbs, such as Englewood. The business proprietors and customers in the CityCenter area are upset that transients are committing quality of life crimes such as shoplifting, alcohol violations, loitering, public intoxication, burglary, drug offenses, etc. Many of the transients use the public computers at the Library inside the Civic Center building for social networking to communicate with acquaintances. They will spend most of the day on and off the computers at the Library. The Library has reported that parents are wary of bringing their children to the Library because they are uncomfortable with the number of homeless people in the Library. The homeless day center located at 901 Englewood Parkway provides services for transients, and oftentimes they will loiter near the day center, adjacent to nearby businesses, creating an uninviting environment according to local businesses.

*Police Officers and the Englewood IMPACT Team are working on this problem using a variety of responses. Patrol officers are conducting extra patrols specific to the violations. The IMPACT Team is also conducting extra patrols, as well as directed enforcement projects in the area. Additionally, IMPACT meets with all of the businesses, community groups and City employees in the area to seek assistance. The Deputy City Manager arranged meetings with all of the stakeholders in an attempt to reduce the seriousness of the problem.*

2. **Cushing Park** - Cushing Park is located about one block north of the CityCenter area. The park has shelters that are inviting for transients to loiter for long periods of time. Additionally, recent information sharing between Englewood PD and the Denver Police Gang Unit has determined that gang members are also in this area selling drugs such as heroin and methamphetamine to transients. Recent contacts with transients and gang members have resulted in drug arrests, warrant arrests, and individuals possessing weapons such as knives. Citizens have expressed their concerns about bringing children to the park playground due to the transient population that remains in the park all day. A nearby flood control zone/open space across the street from Cushing Park is frequently used by transients to sleep at night, as it is heavily treed and transients cannot be seen from the street.

*Similar to the response at the CityCenter, officers (including IMPACT) are conducting extra patrols and directed enforcement projects. IMPACT is also working with the Parks Department on environmental changes to the park (to make it less desirable for the transients).*

3. **3500 block South Bannock** - There are instances of organized criminal activity involving several apartment buildings located in this block. Criminal activity including drugs, stolen vehicles, and burglaries are also being investigated and several tenants/occupants and owners are involved.

The police department and other law enforcement agencies are investigating this criminal activity. To protect the integrity of ongoing law enforcement investigations, details cannot be released. This criminal activity is a catalyst for other crimes that are being experienced in Englewood such as residential burglaries, fraud, large scale retail theft, and drug activity.

4. **Transient motels** - There are four motels in Englewood that support clients that cannot usually afford more expensive motels, apartment rentals, or property ownership. These motels tend to operate on a cash only basis, resulting in poor record keeping, clients that are less than cooperative with law enforcement, and clients that wish to avoid contact all together. In addition, the Colorado Department of Corrections places newly released parole clients at the Englewood motels until more permanent housing can be found. Among the clients that use the motels are those that further criminal activity such as drugs, fraud, theft, assaults, and auto theft.

*Police Officers are conducting extra patrols and directed enforcement at these locations. Additionally, IMPACT works with the property owners and managers to hold them responsible for nuisance violations.*

5. **Large apartment complexes** - There are two very large groups of apartments in Englewood. Three complexes occupy the area near East Girard Avenue and South Gilpin Street. This area encompasses thousands of apartments in three large complexes. Criminal activity in this area is mostly due to crimes of opportunity, such as thefts from vehicles, auto thefts, and burglaries. Family related crimes such as domestic disturbances and noise issues also make up a large portion of the criminal activity in this area. The other large apartment complex is in the area of Broadway and Belleview. This complex has been less than cooperative with police in the past, with management and employees supporting criminal activity such as auto thefts and local burglaries. Current problems relate to domestic disturbances, drugs, and noise disturbances.

*Police conduct extra patrols and take a low tolerance approach to violations in these areas. IMPACT continues to attempt to work with the owners and management of these locations.*

6. **Retail crime** - With hundreds of retail businesses in Englewood, theft and other forms of property crime is a problem, with victims encompassing both business entities and individual citizens. Fraud at times can be a side effect of drug crimes because people need money to buy drugs, and they will often commit crimes related to fraud to obtain money to buy drugs. Fraud and shoplifting occur frequently at our larger retailers such as Walmart, Kmart, King Soopers, and Safeway.

*Englewood has a large population of elderly citizens. Financial scams commonly target Englewood's senior population and the police regularly hold meetings at senior centers regarding scam education and prevention. Additionally, IMPACT and Police Community Relations Specialist work closely with the businesses in an attempt to make them less of a "target" for criminal activity.*

7. **Transients panhandling at major intersections and business districts** - Large intersections such as Broadway & Belleview and the business districts along Broadway and Hampden Avenue often

see complaints regarding panhandlers. The increase in panhandling is directly related to the increase in transient activity. Citizens often report the panhandlers are aggressive and approach cars at stop lights and are rude to passing pedestrians. The panhandlers are difficult to track because they move around the area throughout the day.

*Officers conduct extra patrols in these areas and take a low tolerance approach to violations. IMPACT also meets and works with businesses in close proximity to these locations to seek assistance with this problem.*

This report illustrates an increase in crime and calls for service related to several specific locations in the City. There are several conditions that exist that impact the ability of our department to have a positive influence on these problems:

-Throughout the city, crime and calls for police service continues to rise. Additionally, the nature of these calls require several officers to respond.

-The Police Department has held several positions vacant, many officers have had injuries, and one officer is frequently gone on military duty. Additionally, the demand on officers relative to report writing, handling and booking of evidence, and processing and transporting of prisoners has increased.

-Patrol shifts are often at minimum staffing. When an officer becomes sick or injured (or otherwise requires time off) IMPACT or Traffic Officers are used to cover the shift so that it is at minimum staffing. When a patrol shift is working at minimum staffing, the officers are primarily acting in a reactive mode responding to calls for service, and their ability to be proactive and conduct selective or extra patrols is diminished.