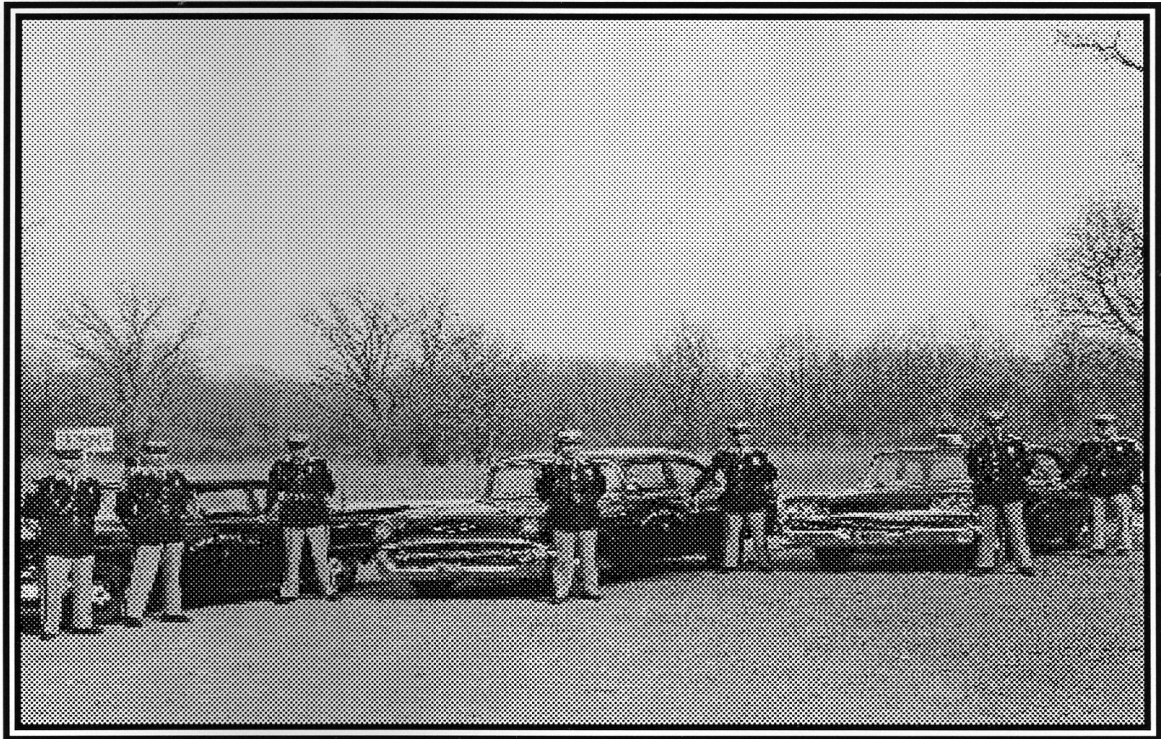# The History of The City of Fairfax Police Department
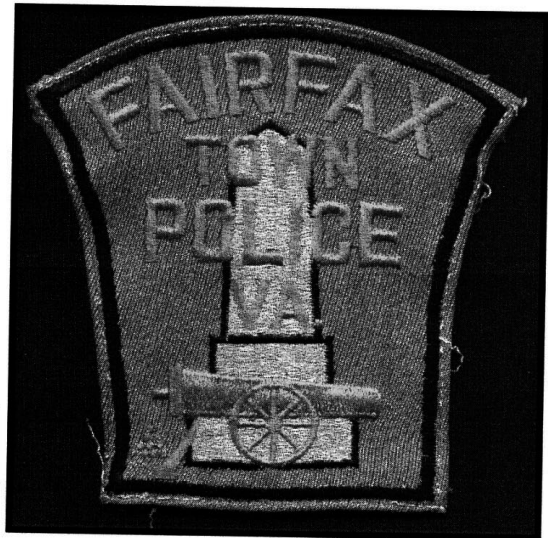

Jason Wisdom

In the heart of the Northern Virginia region lies The City of Fairfax. What started as a small town with a population of under 2,000 people has evolved into a growing and contemporary city with a population of over 20,000 (City of Fairfax Police Department, 1997). Growing simultaneously with the city has been it's police department. What had started as a police department resembling a scene from "The Andy Griffith Show" has evolved into a modern day, professional department that is continually improving itself. Over the last forty-seven years, The City of Fairfax Police Department has continuously been moving away from the traditional, reactive method of law enforcement, and into a more proactive, community-based police department.

THE BEGINNING

In 1948, the town council decided to elect its first uniformed officer. The title to this position was "Town Sergeant" and went to Mr. Haywood Mayberry. At the time, the Town of Fairfax was a very small, rural community and one "law man" of sorts was all that was needed. By 1950 though, the town population had begun to expand. The town council met and decided that it was time to create a police department. Haywood Mayberry went to the local VFW post and recruited what were to be the first Town of Fairfax police officers. These men were Ed Bloomfield, Calvin Long, and Howard Stull. Haywood Mayberry took on the position as Captain, Ed Bloomfield became acting Sergeant and Calvin Long and Howard Stull were made officers.

Uniform Patch, 1950-1963

The salary for the officers at this time was $3,200 a year. An interesting note was how the officers obtained their uniforms: Captain Mayberry had to drive the three men down to the state prison in Richmond to be measured for their uniforms. Ironic as it may sound, their uniforms were actually made in the prison itself. The color of the police uniform at that time was brown and khaki (Stull. 1997).

For police training, the officers attended what was the academy for the Fairfax County police. Because the Town Police would have to rely on the County for their training, the new Town recruits would have to wait until an academy was in session for the County police before they could receive their own training. Until an academy was in session, the training that they would receive would be much less than formal. A good example of this was a situation in which an officer was hired, given his uniform and then went on the road with an older officer. The older officer then took him to a local pond and had him shoot at a couple of cans in the water. That was the extent of his firearms training. The only items that the officers carried at this time were a pair of hand cuffs, a Billy club, and a Smith and Wesson revolver. Later on, the officers also carried a flap-jack, which was carried in a special pocket on the pants leg.

The radio unit was kept in the car, which at that time was a 1949 Mercury with only a red light in the grill. All four men shared this one car at the time. Shift work consisted of three, eight hour shifts: 8am to 4pm, 4pm to midnight, and midnight to 8am. The four men would rotate these shifts every two weeks.
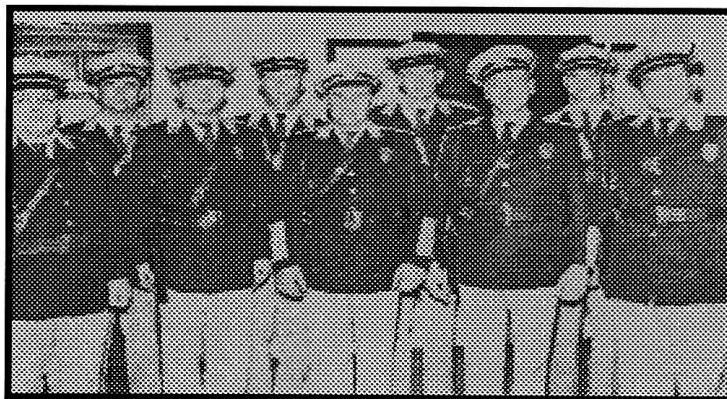

First Police Cruiser, 1950

There would only be one officer on duty for each shift, except for the day shift, in which the Captain would be at the station house. If the officer on duty ever needed assistance, he would radio for a County Officer. The Town Police did not have their own communications system at this time. They shared the same frequency with the County police, who would dispatch the Town police whenever a came in that was in their jurisdiction (Stull, 1997).

The police station itself was located in a small, one story building on Route 123, across from what is now the Juvenile Court house (Stull, 1997). Later in the 1950's, the Police Department moved into the second floor of the old fire house on University Drive, which is now the Crossroads Bar. The Department then moved again into what was called the Willard Estate, which was located on 237 in the area that is now the Court House Plaza shopping center (Stark, 1997).

In 1954, Captain Mayberry resigned from his position and C.F.Young was appointed by the City Council as Chief of Police. An emphasis on schooling officers became evident toward the latter end of the fifties. Three officers had graduated from the Law Enforcement Institute at the University of Maryland and three others were currently attending. Other training involved refresher courses in various police work and schooling for police administration. By the end of the fifties, the four man police force had grown to a strength of nine(Town of Fairfax, 1959).

Town of Fairfax Police Department, 1959
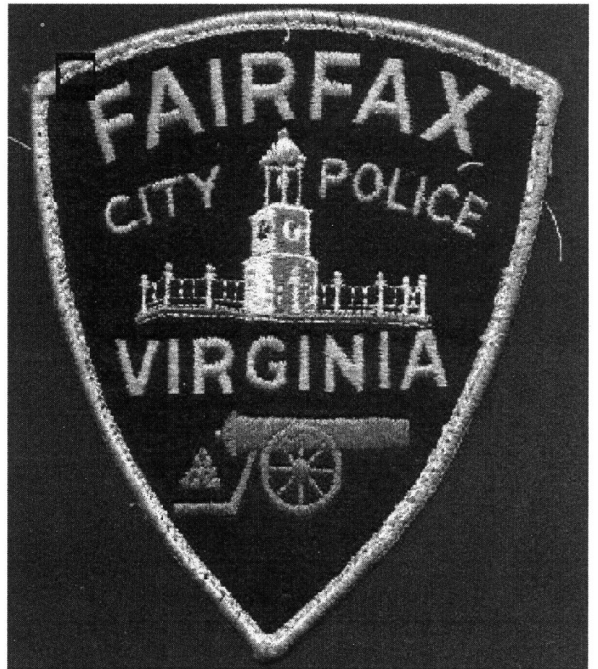
THE 1960'S

The Town of Fairfax Police Department went through many changes in the 1960's. In 1961, the town had made the transition from town to city status. The 'Town of Fairfax Police Department' became 'The City of Fairfax Police Department'.

City Hall Construction, 1961

In 1962, the Police Department moved into a portion of the ground level of the newly built City Hall. With the new location came the police department's very own radio frequency. The department no longer had to rely on the County police for dispatching. The departments first detective bureau was implemented this year as well. Before there was a detectives bureau, the patrol officers would handle their own cases (Stark, 1997).

In 1963, the City became a part of the State Teletype Network. Another new addition to the police department was a full time animal warden (City of Fairfax, 1963). In 1964, Police Chief C.F.Young resigned. Appointed as the new Chief of Police was Murray Kutner. Murray Kutner had just retired from the Metropolitan Police Department, having served over twenty-one years ("City Has New...", 1964).
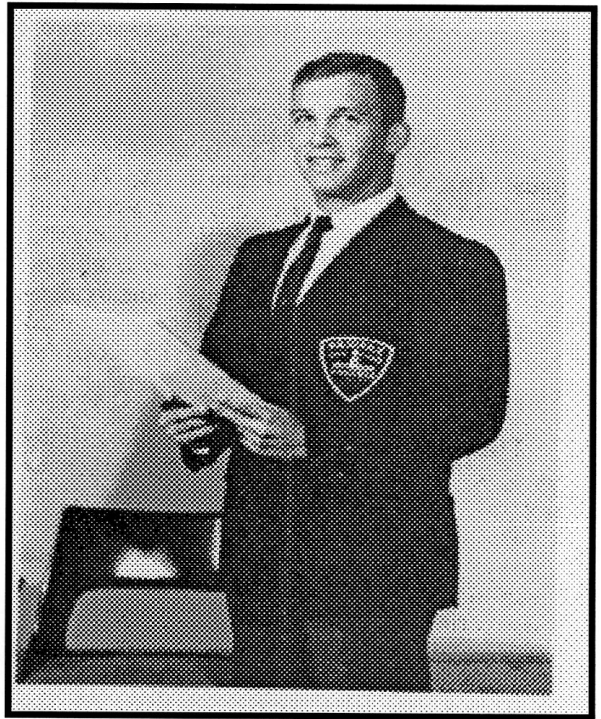

Uniform Patch, 1965-1974

In 1965, Chief Kutner made some substantial improvements. The brown and khaki uniforms were replaced with the blue uniforms that resemble what the officers are wearing today. The training of the officers was intensified by incorporating ten different programs. These included training with agencies such as the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Northern Virginia Police Academy, and college level training at the University of Maryland and American University. A new telecommunications system was updated and installed this year as well (The City of Fairfax, 1965). Chief Kutner also developed the Fairfax Police Youth Club and the Police Explorer Scout Troop . This would be one of many steps in developing a better relationship between the police department and the community. In 1968, the police department became part of the WALES (Washington Area Law Enforcement System) network. This at the time was a high-speed computer communications network which joined the local police agencies together on one system and allowed for the sharing of police records and other essential information (City of Fairfax, 1968). By the end of 1969, the Police Department had grown to a total of forty-two officers (City of Fairfax, 1969).
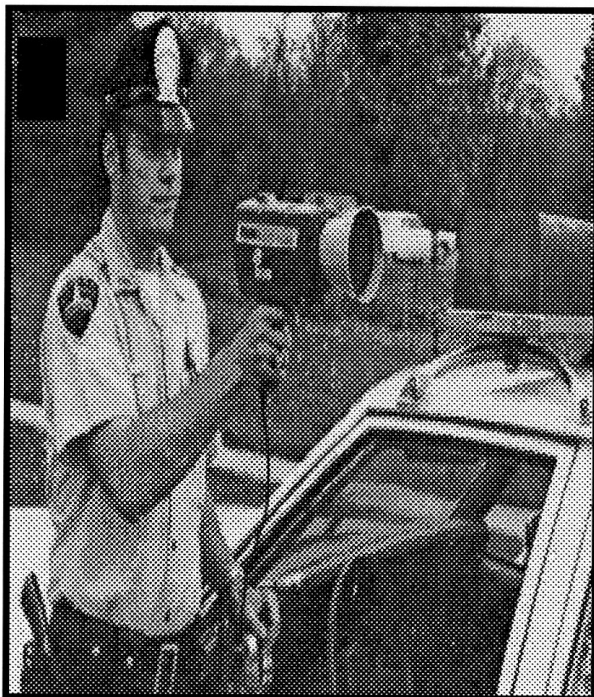
THE 1970'S

In March of 1970, the position of 'Community Officer' was established. This was another great step in improving the relationship between the police and the people of the city. This position would serve as a liaison between the police department and the community. The community officer would also work with the youths of the community by establishing a high school youth council and the explorer post that would work in cooperation with the schools guidance department ("Police Department...", 1970) . In July of 1972, the police department hired its first woman officer, Rita Marinoble. She was assigned as a community officer and dealt

primarily with the juveniles of the community ("Fairfax Hires...",1972). In 1973, to deal with the increasing number of speeding complaints, the department acquired its first hand held radar unit. This unit would only require one officer to operate it. The previous radar system involved the use of two officers: one to drive the radar car, and the other one to drive a second car to stop the speeder and write the

Cpl. Richard VonHerbulis.
First Community Officer, 1970

ticket ("City Police Get..., 1973). In 1974, a new city seal was designed. A new badge was designed that would bear this seal as well as new decals for the police cruisers.

Officer Lee Monroe Demonstrates the radar gun

Murray Kutner resigned from the position as Chief of Police in January of 1975. Sworn in as the new Chief of Police was Leonard P. Kline. Leonard Kline had been a member of the police department since 1953 ("Inspector Leonard...", 1975). In September of 1976, the police department hired its first woman patrol officer, Marsha Johnson.

Unlike Rita Marinoble, who only worked as the community relations officer, Marsha Johnson would be the departments first "patrol" officer ("First Police...",1976). In June of 1977, Chief Kline retired from the department. Taking his place as Chief of Police was Larry F. Wines. Larry Wines had joined the police department in August of 1957, being one of only six officers at the time.

Communications Center, City Hall

Toward the latter end of the seventies, the city police formed a SWAT team. This specially trained unit would deal with potentially dangerous situations. In 1979, the police department initiated a crime prevention program called 'smokey on the air'. CB radios were placed in the police cruisers and at the department headquarters. The police would monitor channel ten and the public was encouraged to report any suspicious activity that they saw over the CB. Rush hour traffic reports were also broadcast over this channel by the police ("Crime

Prevention ...", 1979). Another program developed by the police department in the seventies was 'civilianization'. This program would allow the placement of non-sworn police personnel in positions which were normally carried out by sworn officers. One such area that this was targeted was the communications center. The communications center was expanded at least twice in the seventies to keep up with the increase in police activity. By having civilians take on various roles around the department, this allowed for more police officers to be on the street ("City of Fairfax...", unknown).

Bicentennial Commencement

THE 1980'S

The City of Fairfax Police Department started the eighties with a new Chief of Police. Loyd W. Smith was appointed as Chief of Police in October of 1980 after Chief Wines retired in August earlier in the year. Chief Smith had spent twenty years with the Metropolitan Police Department, concluding his career as Deputy Chief of Police and Commander of the second district ("D.C.Veteran...", 1980).

The eighties seemed to focus greatly on the police department's relationship with the community and the citizens therein. Several programs were developed and implemented in these years. One of these programs was a drug awareness program directed toward the parents of teens in the community. Working with a national organization called H.E.L.P.(Help Educate Loyal Parents), the police developed a program in which they would organize meetings with the parents to discuss the use of the drugs on the street and how parents can help their children deal with the peer pressure that they are confronted with ("H.E.L.P. is on...", 1981). In 1983, Chief Smith started a 'Chief of Police/Citizens Advisory Council'. The purpose of this advisory board was to discuss mutual concerns of both the community and the police department. Chief Smith stated that he started the council for three reasons, "I initiated the advisory council to keep citizens we serve better informed ; to learn from citizens their concerns relative to law enforcement ; and to ascertain how our citizens feel the police can serve them more effectively" ("Police Chief ...", 1983).

Another program implemented was 'Operation Touchback'. This program would require patrol officers to contact certain complainants and inform them of what action was taken in their case. Normally, after a report was taken, the complainant would be left wondering what the status was of their case for days to come. By having the patrol officer 'touchback' with the

complainant, the resident will not be kept in the dark about their situation and will be more inclined to call the police in the future should problems arise again ("Police Initiate...", 1984). To familiarize new Fairfax City residents with the City's police department, the COP (Citizens' Orientation Program) program was developed. A uniformed officer from the city's crime prevention office would greet new city residents with a packet of community information and discuss concerns regarding neighborhood crime. This program would help bring about a positive rapport between the citizens and the police department("Police Greet...", 1985). To even further the citizens involvement with the police department, a volunteer unit was organized in 1985. This program was directed toward retirees who could offer clerical type assistance to the police department, thereby allowing more officers to be on the street ("Police to Form...", 1985).

Uniform Patch, 1975-Present

In 1984, the police department moved out of its cramped quarters in the basement of City Hall and into the John C. Wood Municipal Center on Old Lee Highway ("Police Department...", 1984). The new location was soon followed by a new communications system. The fourteen year old, out dated dispatching system was replaced with a state-of-the art dispatching console.

Along with this was a telecommunication device for the deaf, which would enable dispatch to receive calls from the deaf without the need for a third party to make the call ("New

Equipment...", 1985). In 1986, the department started its first motorbike patrol, which would concentrate on traffic enforcement and park control. In 1987, the department formed an independent 'crime solvers program'. This program would allow people to call the crime solvers phone number and supply information that could help lead to the arrest of individuals involved in criminal activity. The caller could remain anonymous and receive an award of up to $1,000 ("City of Fairfax...", 1987).

THE 1990'S

The City of Fairfax police Department was Nationally Accredited by the Commission for Accreditation of Law Enforcement Agencies in 1992 (City of Fairfax, 1997).

In recent years, the police department has undergone two major changes. One was the appointment of a new Chief of Police in 1993. John J. Skinner, who has been a member of the city's police department for over twenty years, became the new and current Chief of Police. The other significant change was Chief Skinner's restructuring of the police department. The department would now be structured in two divisions: Operations Division and Technical Services Division ("New Police Chief...", 1993).

The Operations Division is composed of the patrol unit, Emergency Services Team, Hostage Negotiations team, and the Special Operations Section. The patrol unit is clearly the most common and visible element of the police department. The patrol unit consists of five squads, each having one Sergeant and about six officers. The Emergency Services Team was previously called the SWAT team. Consisting of specially trained police officers, this unit deals with high risk and potentially violent situations. The Hostage Negotiations Team is comprised of police officers who have been trained to deal with hostage, barricade and suicide situations. Their

main objective is to get the people out of these situations safely. The Special Operations Section is composed of the motorcycle unit, bicycle patrol, parking enforcement and crossing guards.
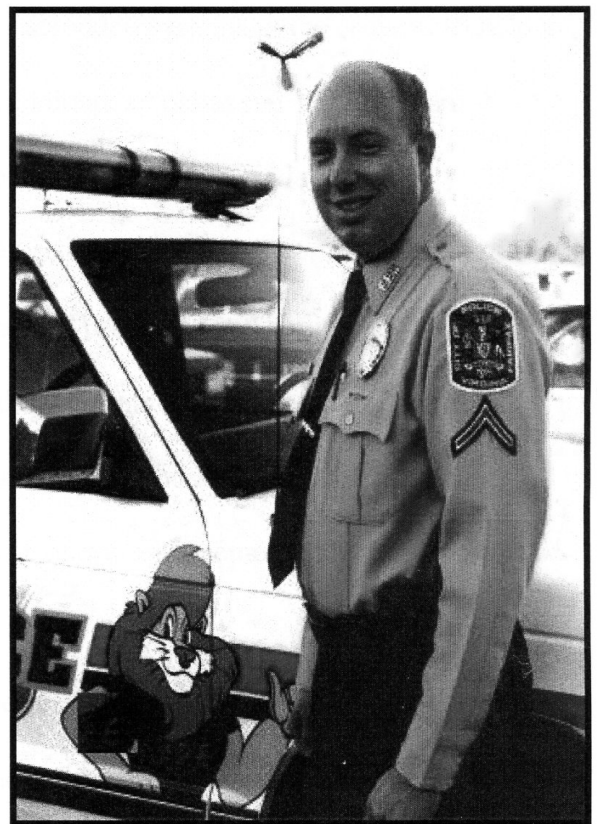

Motorcycle Patrol Officer David McLane

The motorcycle patrol has three officers and a supervisor and is responsible for traffic enforcement as well as special duties such as parade and funeral escorts. The bicycle unit was developed in 1994, and is composed of two full time police officers. This unit allows the police officers to patrol where police cruisers can't always go, such as trails and parks and permit the officer to be in closer contact with the public . The parking enforcement and crossing guards consist of non-sworn personnel and perform a valuable service to the police department (The City of Fairfax Police Department*, 1997).

The other section of the police department is the Technical Services Division. This section is comprised of the detective bureau, computer operations, police records, dispatch

center, and the Community Services Section. The dispatch center, records, and computer operations are other areas of the police department that are comprised of non-sworn personnel. These areas form much of the back bone to the police department's daily operation. The Community Services Section concentrates on services that promote safety to the residents of the city, such as the neighborhood watch program and home security checks. A substantial portion of the Community Services Section deals with the youths of the city. With regards to this would be The Youth Resource Officer, School Resource Officer, and the Juvenile Detective.

The Youth Resource Officer instructs the department's D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) classes to the fifth and sixth grade children in the city's elementary schools. This Officer also instructs parents and community groups with reference to drug education. The School Resource officer concentrates on the safety of the children of middle and high schools in the city. This officer keeps a regular post in one of the city's high schools and also works details that concern this area.

D.A.R.E. Officer Bill Thomas

The Juvenile Detective handles criminal investigations that concern juveniles, either as the victims or perpetrators to a crime (The City of Fairfax Police Department*, 1997).

The City of Fairfax Police Department is always looking ahead to fulfill the needs of the community as well as to keep up with the constant change in technology. Many programs have

been targeted to be expanded over the next few years. Some of these would be the D.A.R.E. program, Officer residency Program (a program in which police officers will reside in residential areas that have a past of criminal activity), and Police/Community Volunteer Unit. Certain divisions of the department have also been selected to be expanded, such as the K-9 unit and the criminal investigations section. New programs are also planned to be implemented into the police department, including a "Police Cadet" program and outreach programs to the Asian and Hispanic communities in the city. To keep up with the fast pace of technology, the department plans to implement mobile computers in the police vehicles, place video systems in the cruisers to help in the prosecution of criminal offenses including D.W.I., initiate a "photo red-light" system, implement an automated computerized parking ticket program, and upgrade the voice communications system (The City of Fairfax Police Department, 1997).

To make good use of the many new and expanded programs and equipment, the City of Fairfax Police Department plans to research new Federal Grants for the funding of additional police officer positions. By doing so, the police department will be able to better serve the community with an enhanced approach to more proactive law enforcement (The City of Fairfax Police Department, 1997).

The City of Fairfax Police Department will be celebrating it's 50th anniversary in the year 2000. The department has grown tremendously in the last forty-seven years, from a four man operation, to a full functioning police force of ninety persons. The city's population is continuously growing, and with that, The City of Fairfax Police Department will unceasingly grow with it to ensure the safety of it's citizens.

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