



Ottawa County Sheriff's Senior Volunteer Program

Evaluation

June 2007



2007 County Board of Commissioners

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INTRODUCTION

The Senior Volunteer Program is a pilot project which was approved by the Ottawa County Board of Commissioners in January 2006. The program is administered by the Sheriff's Office and is designed to utilize the services of volunteers to perform routine tasks that are typically the responsibility of deputy officers. This allows officers more time to perform law enforcement duties such as road patrol, traffic safety, and criminal arrests.

Eligible volunteers must be fifty-five years old or older and possess a valid Michigan driver's license. Candidates must also be in good physical health and not have a criminal background. The Sheriff's Office prefers that program candidates be Ottawa County residents, but volunteers who reside outside the County are also considered for these positions.

EVALUATION

In February 2006, a strategic planning process was initiated to develop specific program goals, objectives, and performance measures for the Senior Volunteer Program. Participants of the planning process included representatives from the Planning and Grants Department and the Sheriff's Office. The result of this effort was the development of a Strategic Outline (**Attachment A**) that defines the program's goals and objectives, program components, and performance measures to determine program effectiveness (i.e. program cost, volunteer hours, and cost-savings/benefit).

This evaluation utilizes six months of program data collected by the senior volunteers between October 2006 and March 2007. These data include the types of duties performed by the volunteers, the hours spent performing various tasks, and the total miles driven (**See Attachment B – Data Collection Form**). A detailed assessment of program cost is also included in this evaluation.

It would have been preferable to conduct a baseline study in order to determine the amount of time deputy officers spent performing the routine tasks now being completed by the senior volunteers. This baseline measurement would have allowed the Planning and Grants Department to verify the actual number of additional hours that deputies were able to spend on other duties as a result of the Senior Volunteer Program. However, there was not ample time to conduct a baseline measurement prior to the implementation of the Program. Although it was not possible to verify actual time savings, it seemed reasonable to conclude that most hours worked by volunteers would result in an equal amount of direct time savings for deputy officers.

Specific information regarding the Program is provided below:

A. Volunteer Hours

During the 6-month data collection period, a total of 923.3 hours of service were provided by 11 senior volunteers. This equates to an average of 38.5 hours per week of service provided to the Sheriff's Office (**Table 1**).

Based on the number of hours worked by the 11 volunteers during the 6-month period, it is estimated that 1,847 total hours of volunteer service could be provided to the Sheriff's Office annually.

Table 1

Volunteer Hours Worked¹	
Number of Senior Volunteers	11
Total Hours Worked (6 months)	923.3
Average Hours Worked (Per Week)	38.5
Hours Worked (Annually ²)	1,846.6

Source: Sheriff's Office

1. Based on 6-months (24 weeks) of data collection
2. Extrapolation based on the actual hours provided during six months

B. Volunteer Duties

Each senior volunteer is typically scheduled to work one shift per week, with each shift lasting approximately eight hours. Volunteers wear Sheriff's Office uniforms, and most work is conducted in a marked Sheriff's Office vehicle. The volunteers work in teams of two to accomplish their assigned tasks, and services are provided Monday through Friday.

The tasks performed by the senior volunteers include:

- 1) Home Security Checks
- 2) Community Patrol
- 3) Handicap Parking Enforcement
- 4) Processing Abandoned Vehicles
- 5) Vehicle Transfers
- 6) Other Departmental Functions

A synopsis of each task, including the total number of hours spent providing each task and the total number of miles driven per task, is provided in the remainder of this section. The number of hours spent per task on a month-to-month basis is provided in **Attachment C**, and the number of miles driven per task by the volunteers on a month-to-month basis is provided in **Attachment D**.

1) Home Security Checks

Residents of Ottawa County may contact the Sheriff's Office if they would like to have their homes monitored while they are away.

During the evaluation period, a total of 210 homes were checked by the senior volunteers (**Table 2**). While no break-ins were discovered, the senior volunteers noted that when unlocked windows and garage doors were found, the proper contact person was notified.

Table 2

Home Security Checks¹	
Homes Checked	210
Hours Worked (6 months)	207.7
Miles Driven	2,360
Hours Worked (Annually ²)	415.4

Source: Sheriff's Office

1. Based on 6-months (24 weeks) of data collection
2. Extrapolation based on the actual hours provided in six months

2) Community Patrol

Senior volunteers conducted community patrols throughout the County in marked Sheriff's Office vehicles. While the volunteers could not enforce the law during these patrols, their presence in the community is viewed as a deterrent to criminal activity. The senior volunteers provided additional "eyes and ears" for the Sheriff's Office and reported that citizens tended to slow down and drive more safely when in the presence of a marked Sheriff's Office vehicle.

Some of the areas that were patrolled by the volunteers during the evaluation period include Davenport University, Grand Valley State University, Kirk Park, and Holland State Park. The total number of miles driven by the volunteers to patrol local community areas was 453 miles (**Table 3**).

Table 3

Community Patrol¹	
Hours Worked (6 months)	39.1
Miles Driven	453
Hours Worked (Annually ²)	78.2

Source: Sheriff's Office

1. Based on 6-months (24 weeks) of data collection
2. Extrapolation based on the actual hours provided in six months

While conducting community patrols, the senior volunteers did not identify every instance in which they provided assistance to citizens, so the actual number of occasions is unknown. However, the types of assistance offered by the volunteers included removing fallen tree limbs from the roadway and calling locksmiths for motorists locked out of their vehicle.

3) *Handicap Parking Enforcement*

The senior volunteers also checked for handicap parking violations throughout the County. Handicap parking enforcements are typically conducted in store and mall parking lots. Some of the locations where parking enforcements were conducted during the evaluation period include Meijer, Family Fare, Walmart, Sam’s Club, Target, Kmart, and the Westshore Mall.

During the evaluation period, the senior volunteers discovered 14 handicap parking violations. Of these violations, 8 resulted in a citation and 2 resulted in a written warning (**Table 4**).

Although the total number of instances was not recorded, the volunteers indicated they spoke with citizens about proper placement of handicap parking cards.

Table 4

Handicap Parking Enforcement¹	
Tickets Issued	8
Hours Worked (6 months)	62.9
Miles Driven	399
Hours Worked (Annually ²)	125.8

Source: Sheriff’s Office

1. Based on 6-months (24 weeks) of data collection
2. Extrapolation based on the actual hours provided in six months

4) *Processing Abandoned Vehicles*

Once an abandoned vehicle is tagged or impounded, the Sheriff’s Office will contact the registered owner of the vehicle and notify them of its current status. If the vehicle is not claimed, the tow company will begin a “title request.”

Once a salvage title is produced, the volunteer photographs the vehicle, records the vehicle identification number (VIN), and has the towing company sign-off on the vehicle.

Senior volunteers spent a total of 195 hours processing 182 abandoned vehicles during the 6-month data collection process (**Table 5**).

Table 5

Processing Abandoned Vehicles¹	
Vehicles Processed	182
Hours Worked (6 months)	195.1
Miles Driven	1,774
Hours Worked (Annually ²)	390.2

Source: Sheriff’s Office

1. Based on 6-months (24 weeks) of data collection
2. Extrapolation based on the actual hours provided in six months

5) *Vehicle Transfers*

Another responsibility performed by the senior volunteers is driving Sheriff’s Office vehicles to and from local mechanics for service and/or maintenance. The volunteers also transfer police vehicles between Sheriff’s Office locations throughout the County.

The volunteers spent 318.6 total hours transferring vehicles and drove a total of 4,068 miles (**Table 6**). Of the 318.6 total hours, 209.7 (65.8%) were dedicated to transporting vehicles for maintenance and 108.9 (34.2%) were spent transporting vehicles between Sheriff's Office locations throughout the County.

Table 6

Vehicle Transfers¹	
Hours Worked (6 months)	318.6
Miles Driven	4,068
Hours Worked (Annually ²)	637.2

Source: Sheriff's Office

1. Based on 6-months (24 weeks) of data collection
2. Extrapolation based on the actual hours provided in six months

6) Other Departmental Functions

Other departmental functions are services provided by the senior volunteers on an as-needed basis. They include, but are not limited to, document delivery, assistance with public relations events, and general clerical assistance.

Document Delivery

During the evaluation period, the senior volunteers spent 51.9 hours delivering Sheriff's Office documents to various agencies and municipalities throughout the County (**Table 7**).

Public Relations

The senior volunteers spent 21 hours assisting with local events such as attending a public relations event at the Grand Haven Fire Department and participating in the "National Night Out Against Crime" in Allendale.

General Clerical Assistance

The senior volunteers provided a total of 27 hours of clerical assistance for the Sheriff's Office.

Dog Census

It was anticipated that this task would be performed for the County Treasurer's Office by the senior volunteers. However, due to other priorities and limited resources, the Sheriff's Office determined that it would not utilize the volunteers in this capacity.

Table 7

Other Departmental Functions¹	
Document Delivery (6 months)	51.9
Public Relations (6 months)	21.0
Clerical Assistance (6 months)	27.0
Total Hours (6 months)	99.9
Total Hours Worked (Annually ²)	199.8

Source: Sheriff's Office

1. Based on 6-months (24 weeks) of data collection
2. Extrapolation based on the actual hours provided in six months

C. Program Cost

Program funding comes from the Sheriff's Office budget. The expenditures include administrative items (i.e. recruitment, training¹, and supervising), as well as equipment and vehicle expenses.

The total cost to implement and operate the program during the first year was \$12,854 (**Table 8**). The projected annual cost to continue operating the program in its current format (i.e. 11-volunteer unit) is \$9,463. This reduced amount is due to the fact that many of the expenditures incurred during the first year of operation were one-time investments.

An expansion of the program to include another 11-volunteer unit is being considered by the Sheriff's Office. The projected annual cost to implement and operate an expanded program is \$20,396. A detailed cost analysis with itemized expenses is included in **Attachment E**.

Table 8

Program Cost		
	Total	Cost of Volunteer Service (Per Hour) ¹
Program Cost (First Year – Pilot Program)	\$12,854	\$6.96
Program Cost (Continuation of Pilot Program)	\$9,463	\$5.12
Program Cost (Expanded Program)	\$20,396	\$5.52

Source: Fiscal Services Department

1. Pilot Program cost per volunteer is based on 1,846.6 hours of service (annually); Expanded Program cost per volunteer is based on 3,693.2 hours of service (annually)

1. Volunteers receive two days (16 hours) of initial program training from Sheriff's Office staff. On-going training is also provided to volunteers two times per year.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Program administrators believe that the greatest benefit of the Senior Volunteer Program is the amount of extra time that deputies can spend performing tasks which help to deter criminal activity throughout Ottawa County.

During the 6-month data collection process, the eleven volunteers provided 923 total hours of service. This equates to nearly 40 hours per week, or 1 FTE (i.e. Full Time Equivalent), of volunteer service per year. When comparing the cost to administer the volunteer program during its first year (\$12,854) to the cost of paying a deputy officer to perform the same duties (\$65,680¹), it is easy to see that the County realized a cost-savings of \$4.11² for every dollar spent on the program.

In addition to improving the utilization of deputies' time, the Program has also made a positive impact on the reputation of the Sheriff's Office. Ottawa County citizens have expressed appreciation for efforts in enforcing handicap parking violations, in performing home security checks, and in creating goodwill at public relations events.

At present, the program has 11 volunteers who serve as a single 'unit.' The Sheriff's Office is considering expanding the program to include another 11-volunteer unit at a cost of \$20,396. Supervision for the expanded unit would come from existing staff and would not require additional personnel. If the expansion were to occur, a total of 80 hours per week of volunteer service could potentially be provided to the Sheriff's Office at a cost-savings of \$5.44³ for every dollar spent to operate the program.

It is anticipated by the Sheriff's Office that an expansion of the Program would reduce the total time and miles that are presently needed to perform tasks due to the fact that each volunteer-unit would be assigned to work in a designated area of the County. This potential expansion would allow volunteers to perform additional time-saving tasks (e.g. serving subpoenas) for deputies.

It is recommended that the program be continued, and that the expansion be supported in order to maximize the amount of time that deputy officers can spend directly on law enforcement activities.

1. This figure is based on the number of actual hours of deputy officer time saved during one year (1,642) multiplied by the average hourly salary and fringe benefit rate (\$40) of a deputy officer
2. This figure is based on the difference between the cost of a single deputy officer's salary and fringes (\$65,680) and the program cost (\$12,854) divided by the program cost
3. This figure is based on the difference between the cost of two deputy officers' salary and fringes (\$131,360) and the program cost (\$20,396) divided by the program cost

Attachments

Attachment A
STRATEGIC OUTLINE
Sheriff's Senior Volunteer Program

Vision:

To provide community enforcement of non-criminal activities through Senior Volunteer Deputies.

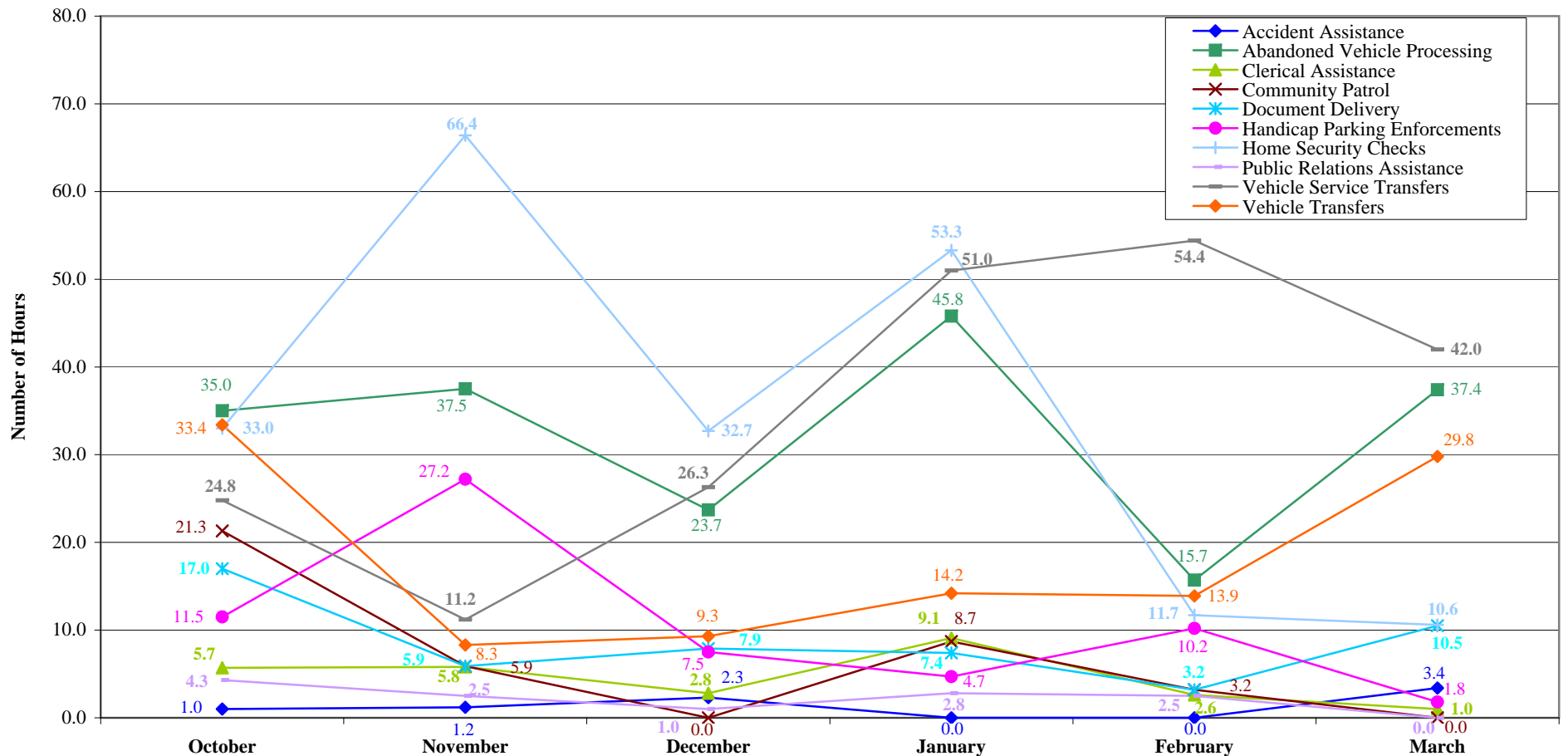
TARGET POPULATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sheriff Deputies • Citizens
TARGET POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deputies Involved In Non-Criminal Enforcement Activities (i.e. Home Checks, Handicap Violations, Document Delivery, Vehicle Maintenance Transfers, Abandoned Vehicles, Community/Public Relations Events, Clerical Assistance, General Community Patrol, And Dog Census) • Ottawa County Residents
GOALS & OBJECTIVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct Home Checks Of Individuals On Vacation • Enforce Handicap Parking Violations • Deliver County Sheriff's Documents • Transfer County Sheriff's Vehicles To Service Providers (Interior/Exterior, Electrical, Mechanical Service) • Process Paperwork For Abandoned Vehicles • Attend Community/Public Relations Events • Provide Clerical Assistance For Sheriff's Office • Conduct General Community Patrol • Conduct Dog Census
SELF REPORTED AND OUTPUT- BASED MEASURES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home Checks (Number, Miles, And Time) • Break-Ins Discovered (Number) • Handicap Parking Violations (Number, Miles, And Time) • Document Delivery Trips (Number, Miles, And Time) • Vehicle Service Trips (Number, Miles, And Time) • Abandoned Vehicles Processed (Number, Miles, And Time) • Community/Public Relations Events (Number, Miles, And Time) • Clerical Duties (Miles And Time) • General Community Patrol (Miles and Time) • Dog Census (Number, Miles, And Time)
OUTCOME BASED MEASURES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program Cost (Total And Per Volunteer) • Volunteer Hours (Total And Per Person) • Cost Savings/Benefit

Attachment C

Number of Hours Devoted to Each Activity (October 2006 - March 2007)

	Accident Assistance ¹		Abandoned Vehicle Processing		Clerical Assistance		Community Patrol		Document Delivery		Handicap Parking Enforcements		Home Security Checks		Public Relations Assistance		Vehicle Service Transfers		Vehicle Transfers		Total Hours
	# of Hours	% of Total	# of Hours	% of Total	# of Hours	% of Total	# of Hours	% of Total	# of Hours	% of Total	# of Hours	% of Total	# of Hours	% of Total	# of Hours	% of Total	# of Hours	% of Total	# of Hours	% of Total	
October	1.0	0.5%	35.0	18.7%	5.7	3.0%	21.3	11.4%	17.0	9.1%	11.5	6.1%	33.0	17.6%	4.3	2.3%	24.8	13.3%	33.4	17.9%	187.0
November	1.2	0.7%	37.5	21.8%	5.8	3.4%	5.9	3.4%	5.9	3.4%	27.2	15.8%	66.4	38.6%	2.5	1.5%	11.2	6.5%	8.3	4.8%	171.9
December	2.3	2.0%	23.7	20.9%	2.8	2.5%	0.0	0.0%	7.9	7.0%	7.5	6.6%	32.7	28.8%	1.0	0.9%	26.3	23.2%	9.3	8.2%	113.5
January	0.0	0.0%	45.8	23.2%	9.1	4.6%	8.7	4.4%	7.4	3.8%	4.7	2.4%	53.3	27.1%	2.8	1.4%	51.0	25.9%	14.2	7.2%	197.0
February	0.0	0.0%	15.7	13.4%	2.6	2.2%	3.2	2.7%	3.2	2.7%	10.2	8.9%	11.7	10.0%	2.5	2.1%	54.4	46.3%	13.9	11.8%	117.4
March	3.4	2.5%	37.4	27.4%	1.0	0.7%	0.0	0.0%	10.5	7.7%	1.8	1.3%	10.6	7.8%	0.0	0.0%	42.0	30.8%	29.8	21.8%	136.5
Total	7.9	0.8%	195.1	21.1%	27.0	2.9%	39.1	4.2%	51.9	5.6%	62.9	6.8%	207.7	22.5%	13.1	1.4%	209.7	22.7%	108.9	11.8%	923.3

¹ Although 'Accident Assistance' was not included as an activity code on the data collection form, some senior volunteers noted that this type of assistance was provided on occasion.

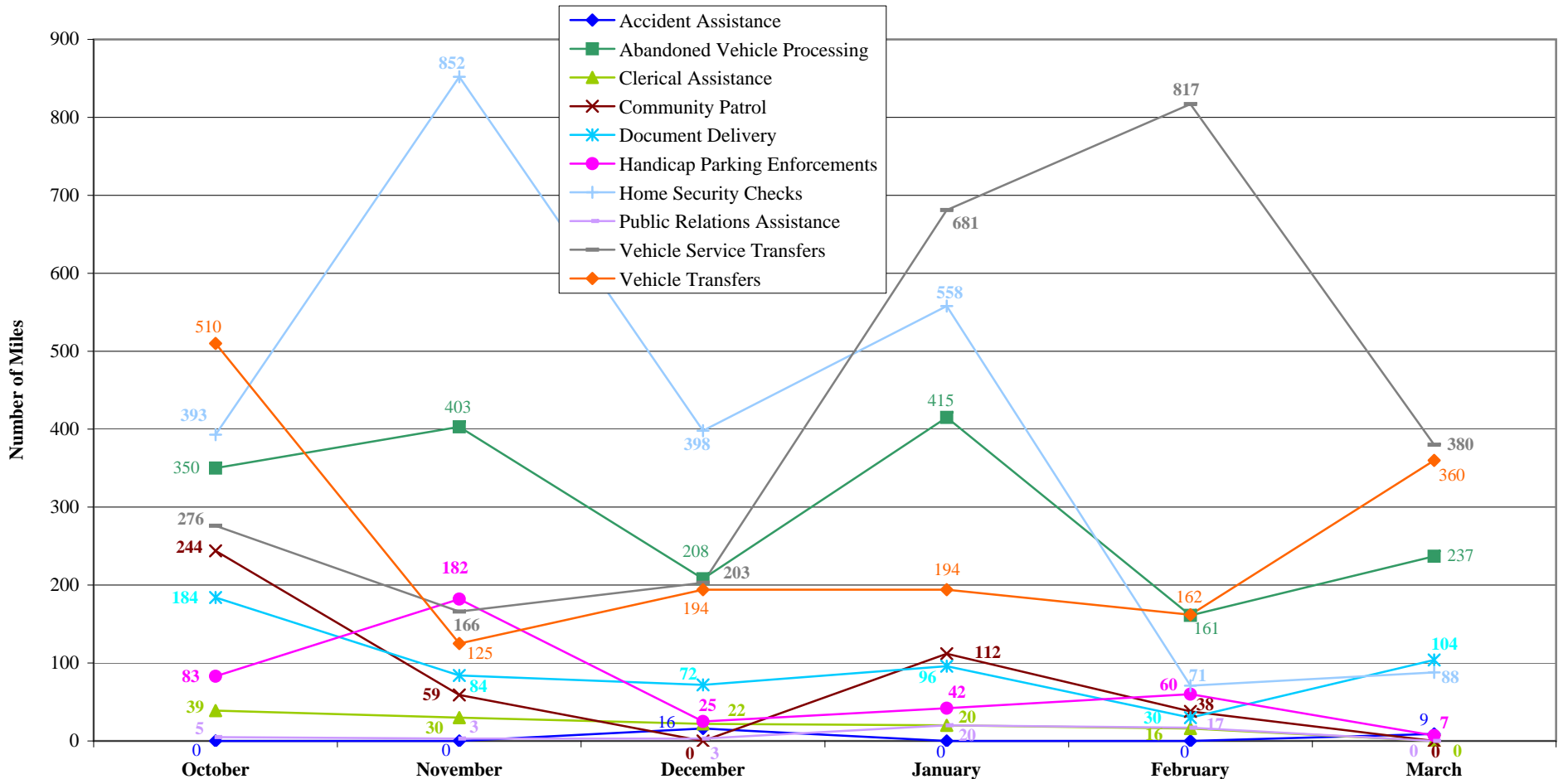


Attachment D

Number of Miles Devoted to Each Activity (October 2006 - March 2007)

	Accident Assistance ¹		Abandoned Vehicle Processing		Clerical Assistance		Community Patrol		Document Delivery		Handicap Parking Enforcements		Home Security Checks		Public Relations Assistance		Vehicle Service Transfers		Vehicle Transfers		Total Miles
	# of Miles	% of Total	# of Miles	% of Total	# of Miles	% of Total	# of Miles	% of Total	# of Miles	% of Total	# of Miles	% of Total	# of Miles	% of Total	# of Miles	% of Total	# of Miles	% of Total	# of Miles	% of Total	
October	0	0.0%	350	16.8%	39	1.9%	244	11.7%	184	8.8%	83	4.0%	393	18.9%	5	0.2%	276	13.2%	510	24.5%	2,084
November	0	0.0%	403	21.2%	30	1.6%	59	3.1%	84	4.4%	182	9.6%	852	44.7%	3	0.2%	166	8.7%	125	6.6%	1,904
December	16	1.4%	208	18.2%	22	1.9%	0	0.0%	72	6.3%	25	2.2%	398	34.9%	3	0.3%	203	17.8%	194	17.0%	1,141
January	0	0.0%	415	19.4%	20	0.9%	112	5.2%	96	4.5%	42	2.0%	558	26.1%	20	0.9%	681	31.9%	194	9.1%	2,138
February	0	0.0%	161	11.7%	16	1.2%	38	2.8%	30	2.2%	60	4.4%	71	5.2%	17	1.2%	817	59.5%	162	11.8%	1,372
March	9	0.8%	237	20.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	104	8.8%	7	0.6%	88	7.4%	0	0.0%	380	32.1%	360	30.4%	1,185
Total	25	0.3%	1,774	18.1%	127	1.3%	453	4.6%	570	5.8%	399	4.1%	2,360	24.0%	48	0.5%	2,523	25.7%	1,545	15.7%	9,824

¹ Although 'Accident Assistance' was not included as an activity code on the data collection form, some senior volunteers noted that this type of assistance was provided on occasion.



Attachment E
Senior Volunteer Program - Annual Cost

Program Expenses	Actual	Projected Cost		
	Pilot Program (11 Volunteers)	Continuation of Pilot Program (11 Volunteers)	Expanded Program - Implementation and Operational Cost (22 Total Volunteers)	Continuation of Expanded Program (22 Total Volunteers)
Administrative Expenses ¹				
Hiring	\$461.43	—	\$461.43	—
Supervising	\$5,720.16	\$5,720.16	\$5,720.16	\$5,720.16
Training	\$1,317.66 ²	\$198.24 ³	\$1,317.66 ²	\$198.24 ³
Total Administrative Cost	\$7,499.25	\$5,918.40	\$7,499.25	\$5,918.40
Equipment Expenses				
Uniforms	\$1,210.00 ⁴	\$242.00 ⁵	\$1,210.00 ⁴	\$242.00 ⁵
Cell Phones	\$936.00 ⁶	\$936.00 ⁶	\$1,872.00 ⁷	\$1,872.00 ⁷
Camera	\$137.00	—	\$137.00	—
Miscellaneous ⁸	\$145.00	—	\$145.00	—
Total Equipment Cost	\$2,428.00	\$1,178.00	\$3,364.00	\$2,114.00
Vehicle Expenses				
Fuel	\$1,826.28 ⁹	\$1,826.28 ⁹	\$3,652.56 ¹⁰	\$3,652.56 ¹⁰
Maintenance	\$540.00 ¹¹	\$540.00 ¹¹	\$1,080.00 ¹²	\$1,080.00 ¹²
Vehicle Conversion ¹³	\$560.00	—	—	—
New Vehicle	—	—	\$4,800.00 ¹⁴	\$4,800.00 ¹⁴
Total Vehicle Cost	\$2,926.28	\$2,366.28	\$9,532.56	\$9,532.56
Total Program Cost (Per Year)	\$12,853.53	\$9,462.68	\$20,395.81	\$17,564.96

¹ The supplemental table provided below illustrates the estimated number of hours and the corresponding wages attributed to each administrative task by each employee.

² Calculation based on the cost (\$559.71) of an initial training multiplied by two initial trainings per year plus the cost (\$99.12) of an on-going training session multiplied by two on-going training sessions per year

³ Calculation based on the cost (\$99.12) of an on-going training session multiplied by two training sessions per year

⁴ Calculation based on the cost per uniform (\$110) multiplied by the number of volunteers (11).

⁵ Calculation based on the total cost (\$1,210) to provide uniforms for 11 volunteers multiplied by a 20% turnover rate.

⁶ Yearly cell phone expense calculation based on the monthly cost (\$78) for two cell phones multiplied by 12 months

⁷ Yearly cell phone expense calculation based on the monthly cost (\$156) for four cell phones multiplied by 12 months

⁸ Includes battery packs, clipboards, and other expenses

⁹ Yearly fuel expense calculation based on the 10 month fuel expense (\$1,521.90) for one vehicle extrapolated to 12 months

¹⁰ Yearly fuel expense calculation based on the 10 month fuel expense (\$3,043.80) for two vehicles extrapolated to 12 months

¹¹ Yearly maintenance cost calculation based on the monthly maintenance cost (\$45) for one vehicle multiplied by 12 months

¹² Yearly maintenance cost calculation based on the monthly maintenance cost (\$90) for two vehicles multiplied by 12 months

¹³ This figure represents the cost to convert an existing Sheriff's Office vehicle

¹⁴ The Sheriff's Office anticipates a new vehicle purchase in the 2008 budget at a cost of \$24,000; this figure is the amortized cost over a 5-year period.

Supplemental Table
(Detailed Breakdown of Administrative Expenses)

Employee	Hourly Wage (Salary and Fringes)	Hiring		Supervising		Training			
		Hours Hiring (Per Year)	Total Wages Attributed to Hiring (Per Year)	Hours Supervising (Per Year)	Total Wages Attributed to Supervising (Per Year)	Hours Per Initial Training	Total Wages Attributed to Each Initial Training	Hours Per On-Going Training	Total Wages Attributed to Each On-Going Training
Steve Austin	\$44.91					1.50	\$67.37		
Mike Brookhouse	\$49.17					1.00	\$49.17		
Bill DeWitt	\$44.85					0.50	\$22.43		
Lee Hoeksema	\$49.56	3.00	\$148.68	72.00	\$3,568.32	3.50	\$173.46	2.00	\$99.12
Steve Kempker	\$49.96	3.00	\$149.88			2.25	\$112.41		
Jason Kik	\$39.99					1.00	\$39.99		
Steve Kraai	\$41.36					1.00	\$41.36		
Jeff Somers	\$40.18					0.75	\$30.14		
Greg Steigenga	\$54.29	3.00	\$162.87						
Bill Ward	\$44.83			48.00	\$2,151.84				
Tari Zahm	\$23.38					1.00	\$23.38		
Total		9.00	\$461.43	120.00	\$5,720.16	12.50	\$559.71	2.00	\$99.12



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