Collaborations and Overlapping Services in Harris County Law Enforcement
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In Harris County, there are more than 60 law enforcement agencies. In general, these agencies provide a high level of service to area residents. However, there are possible efficiencies and improvements to be found. The funding that supports these entities mostly comes from local general funds and, on average, accounts for about 30 percent of local government budgets. The sheer number of agencies creates multiple overlapping services and duplicative costs. While several existing collaborations between local agencies have been successful, this more in-depth look at local law enforcement operations lays out possible options for improving service and cutting costs.

**Background**

This report will lay out the landscape of law enforcement in Harris County and document existing overlapping services. From there it will identify areas where successful collaborations have taken place and explore options for future collaboration. For each option, it will describe the pros and cons. Ultimately, the listed options are a starting point for discussions about how to continue to strengthen the county’s overall public safety efforts and create a high level of service for all residents.

This report is the second in a larger effort by the Kinder Institute for Urban Research to address critical issues of governance in the Greater Houston area. This work began with The Pension Question report that was released in 2016 and helped shape the conversation about the way forward with that issue. It continues here with an examination of local law enforcement agencies and the services they provide.

**Methodology**

This study draws from both quantitative and qualitative research. Interviews were conducted with leaders from several local police agencies and with relevant elected officials. Budgetary analysis and options were laid out by TischlerBise, a fiscal and economic planning consultant, and by Kinder Institute researchers. Best practice research drawn from examples from across the country offers a variety of options that could be pursued locally.

**Findings**

- Together, the Harris County Sheriff’s Office, the Harris County Constable Offices, the Houston Police Department (HPD), the 29 small city police forces, and the more than 20 other law enforcement agencies operating in Harris County spend at least $1.6 billion per year on law enforcement.

- Together, these more than 60 law enforcement agencies in the county employ approximately 12,000 sworn officers.
Relative to the number of people and jobs in the county, the number of sworn officers is about half that of New York and Chicago—but approximately the same as Dallas and Los Angeles.

Houston’s lack of annexation over several decades has shifted law enforcement responsibility for a larger number of residents to the county and especially the sheriff’s office. This shift has likely led to entities such as municipal utility districts and homeowners associations entering into more service contracts with the sheriff’s office and the constable offices.

Harris County’s contract deputy program appears to be unique in Texas in its scale and use of on-duty officers for contracts. Although the program allows individual communities to obtain “boutique” law enforcement service, it also raises questions about the equitable distribution of law enforcement services.

The Joint Processing Center is an example of combining city and county law enforcement resources and is estimated to save the city $3 million annually once in operation.

The county could also save considerable funds—perhaps as much as $22 million per year—by requiring that contracts cover the full cost of sheriff and constable deputies.

Aligning constable/justice of the peace precincts with the county commissioner precincts could reduce confusion on the part of constituents and equalize workloads for both constables and justices of the peace.

Smaller cities in the county could save money by consolidating some of the 29 separate police forces currently in operation, as has been done in the Memorial Villages.

Efficiencies could be gained by reforming and/or consolidating highway patrol and enforcement responsibility, currently divided between multiple area agencies.

Considerable savings could be obtained by consolidating a variety of “back-office” operations among all law enforcement agencies, including evidence and property rooms, training facilities, 911 response systems, technology systems and procurement processes.
## FIGURE 1

### Options Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Option Description</th>
<th>Affected Agencies</th>
<th>Page Number</th>
<th>Pros</th>
<th>Cons</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-1</td>
<td>Consolidate City of Houston and Harris County government</td>
<td>HPD, HCSO, HCCOs</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Reduce overlapping services and administrative costs</td>
<td>Politically impossible; Large bureaucracy losses</td>
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<tr>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>Merge HPD and METRO PD</td>
<td>METRO, HPD</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Reduce overlapping agencies and administrative costs</td>
<td>Jurisdictional constraints; Perception of reduced quality</td>
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<tr>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>Consolidate contiguous, smaller police agencies</td>
<td>Municipal PDs</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Reduce administrative and operations costs; Economies of scale</td>
<td>Jurisdictional constraints; Perception of reduced quality</td>
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<tr>
<td>2-1</td>
<td>Consolidate or rearrange duties between Sheriff and Constables</td>
<td>HCCOs, HCSO</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Reduce cost to county general funds; Simplify patrol responsibility</td>
<td>Perception of reduced quality; Inequitable coverage in some cases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-2</td>
<td>Align Constable/Justice of the Peace Precincts with County Commissioner Precincts</td>
<td>HCCOs</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Reduced jurisdictional confusion; Evenly weighted funding</td>
<td>Politically difficult; Initial confusion with changes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-1</td>
<td>Shift highway patrol responsibility to reduce number of involved agencies</td>
<td>HCCOs, HCSO, METRO, HPD</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Central traffic enforcement; Remove conflicting jurisdictions</td>
<td>Perception of reduced quality of service; Shifts costs between agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-2</td>
<td>Consolidate overlapping functions, especially between City and County</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Reduce overlapping administrative and maintenance costs</td>
<td>Coordination; Loss of local autonomy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-3</td>
<td>Share technology costs and systems between agencies</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>Increase communication; Financial savings</td>
<td>Data security: Loss of local autonomy</td>
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Introduction

Like most local governments in the United States, local governments in Houston view public safety—and especially law enforcement—as their highest priority. This high priority is strongly reflected in local government spending on law enforcement.

Together, Harris County, the City of Houston, 29 smaller municipalities, and dozens of smaller political subdivisions in the county such as school districts, spend at least $1.6 billion per year on law enforcement activities. The vast majority of this spending comes from general tax revenue. Figure 2 shows how that $1.6 billion roughly splits out among local agencies. HPD is by far the largest agency in terms of spending.

For most local governments, about 30 percent of all local general fund revenue is devoted to policing and other public safety activities. Overall, the local budgets support more than 12,000 sworn police officers and deputies. And all agencies continually push for more resources and officers, often with strong political support from elected officials.

At the same time, however, there is concern that some law enforcement activities may be duplicative, thus increasing

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**FIGURE 2**

Size of Annual Law Enforcement Safety Spending

Notes:
- Houston Police Department spending is from the FY2018 City of Houston Budget.
- Smaller Cities spending is the sum of all cities in Harris County with Law Enforcement/Police budgets, excluding Houston.
- Harris County Sheriff’s Office spending is from FY2017 County budget and excludes county-wide detention and medical services.
- Harris County Constables spending is the sum of all constable precincts budgets from FY2017 County budget.
- Specialized Agencies spending is the sum of FY2018 police and security budgets for school districts with standalone police agencies and the FY2018 Law Enforcement budget for METRO.
- Throughout this report budget years were the most current information at time of research for each entity.
the cost. In Harris County alone, there are more than 60 separate law enforcement agencies, including not just the Houston Police Department (HPD) and the Harris County Sheriff’s Office, but eight Harris County Constable Offices, 29 smaller-city police departments, and specialized police forces for METRO, educational institutions and other agencies. HPD, the sheriff and the constables sometimes patrol overlapping areas.

The possibility of consolidating at least some law enforcement services is not new—and, indeed, some services have been successfully consolidated in the past. Separate airport and parks forces were merged into HPD many years ago. The Joint Processing Center, which will open this year, is an example of city-county cooperation on law enforcement, consolidating intake of all individuals from the city and county law enforcement agencies. In addition, a wide range of cooperative arrangements and collaborations exist. Examples include local participation in federal task forces such as the Urban Areas Security Initiative which coordinates response and preparation to homeland security threats, and the Crisis Intervention Response Team, through which officers from both HPD and the sheriff’s office work with mental health professionals to intervene in situations where mental health care may be more effective than arrest.

Many other possible efforts at consolidation and cooperation are discussed from time to time. The recent long-term financial plan for the City of Houston, prepared by PFM Group, proposed that the city consider merging the Metropolitan Transit Authority’s police department (METRO Police) into HPD, as happened with airport and parks in the past. The city and county still maintain separate crime labs and many law enforcement agencies maintain separate evidence rooms, even within the Harris County law enforcement structure. The question of whether the sheriff and the eight constables provide duplicative services often arises.

However, there are considerable challenges to further consolidation and cooperation. Many constituencies benefit from the current situation even if it is duplicative—not just the individual law enforcement agencies themselves, but others as well. Many homeowner associations and residents of municipal utility districts, for example, benefit from contracts with the sheriff and the constables, even though this creates equity of coverage issues.

Furthermore, as in any government bureaucracy, a variety of other considerations makes serious discussion of consolidation and collaboration difficult. Different pension systems and different organizational cultures are huge barriers to moves toward more efficiency. In addition, politics can play a role. Elected officials are often hesitant to alter law enforcement arrangements for fear they will be blamed if services decline. Moreover, several law enforcement positions within Harris County are elected positions.

This report seeks to:

- Lay out the landscape of law enforcement in Harris County and document existing overlapping services;
- Identify areas where successful collaborations have taken place;
- Identify possible future options for collaboration or consolidation; and
- Describe the pros and cons of these possible options.

This report provides facts about the budgets and duties of Harris County law enforcement agencies and also identifies lessons learned from consolidation and cooperation among law enforcement agencies in other cities and metropolitan areas around the nation where applicable. Despite the different local contexts, the examples contribute to a discussion on how other communities solved issues similar to those faced by law enforcement agencies in Harris County.

There are four key areas where overlaps exist and possible interventions may make sense:

- Patrol units
- Shared facilities and services
- Highway monitoring and enforcement
- Technology and data systems

It is not our intent to recommend an overhaul of the law enforcement system, but rather to provide information for those interested in seeking greater collaboration, efficiency and cost-savings in that system.
Local Context

While there are more than 60 agencies total, this deeper look focuses on the largest entities—the Houston Police Department, the Harris County Sheriff’s Office, the eight Harris County Constable Offices, the Metropolitan Transit Authority police department, and the Houston Independent School District police department—with a general overview of other school district police departments. A cumulative overview of other smaller city departments is also included. The section ends with an overview of the more apparent overlapping services in the region.

Law enforcement effort is often expressed in one of two ways: either in terms of the amount of money the agency spends per resident within their jurisdiction or by the number of officers per 1,000 residents. While each of these are useful measures, neither account for the fact that many people live in one jurisdiction but spend a large amount of time working in another jurisdiction. For example, only a few thousand people live in downtown Houston, but 150,000 people work there, many of whom live outside of the city limits. When they are at work downtown they are served by HPD, but when they return home they are not. To properly account for the population that HPD and other departments serve and the amount of money they devote to those services, throughout this report we compare the number of sworn officers within a police department to the total number of residents plus jobs within that jurisdiction. Including the number of jobs alongside the population living within the jurisdiction allows for the capturing of work populations and better accounts for the total efforts of an agency.

This ratio of officers to population plus jobs also makes comparing departments of different sizes, with different budgets, far less complicated. In Figure 3, the officers per 1,000 population plus jobs and the budget per overall population plus jobs numbers offer a good point of comparison between local agencies. The figures for small cities and school district police departments are average numbers across several departments. The numbers for the sheriff’s office in the table below reflect only the residents and jobs within unincorporated Harris County. (See Appendix A for a larger breakdown. See also supporting document prepared by TischlerBise for in-depth comparison of the major law enforcement agencies budgets).

The officer to population-plus-jobs ratios and the spending to population-plus-jobs rates shown in Figure 3 align with the overall size and budgets of the departments, with one exception—the small cities. Several small cities are devoting a huge amount of resources to their departments compared to other agencies. On average, the smaller cities have higher ratios for both spending and officers than the sheriff and about on par with HPD. The high-resourced small cities have far greater ratios than the other departments in the county (See Appendix D). The ability to make this greater level of investment, and provide a high level of service, is one reason many smaller cities maintain their own police forces.

Outside of the small cities, HPD and the sheriff’s office devote far more money and officers to their jurisdictions than the constable offices and specialized smaller agencies. There is a fair amount of difference within the constable offices, where some smaller precincts such as...
Precinct 6, offer higher ratios of both spending and officers than their peer precincts.

While the staffing levels for individual agencies are often contentious issues, the 11 major law enforcement agencies in Harris County (HPD, sheriff, the eight constable offices, and METRO Police) and the agencies from the other small cities collectively employ 10,900 sworn officers. This translates to an estimated overall county rate of 1.6 officers per 1,000 population-plus-jobs, which is similar to the combined officer-to-population-plus-jobs rates of the Dallas Police Department and Dallas County Sheriff and the Los Angeles Police Department and Los Angeles County Sheriff.

We can use Figure 4 and the officer-to-population-plus-jobs ratios drawn from FBI 2016 Uniform Crime Reporting Data, to compare HPD and the sheriff to peer agencies.

Here, HPD lags behind other large cities. Two of the nation’s largest cities—New York and Chicago—have officer-to-population-plus-jobs ratios more than double that of HPD. Los Angeles and Dallas, which are more similar
to Houston in their geographic context, have similar officer-to-population-plus-jobs ratios, though Houston lags behind both those cities. In fact, with a reduction in officers since 2016, HPD’s rate has declined to 1.21 officers per 1,000 population-plus-jobs today. However, when looking at trends in crime rates, the difference has not appeared to matter. Despite Houston’s declining sworn officer pool, the city’s overall crime rate has been on the decline for several decades.4

Looking at the Harris County Sheriff’s Office and parallel agencies in the home counties of the major city comparisons, the sheriff is even with or above most peers in its officer-to-population-plus-jobs ratios. The county numbers in Figure 4 are drawn by subtracting the major city’s population-plus-jobs number from the county’s overall number. While not a perfect proxy given the existence of many smaller municipalities within each county, it provides a starting point for comparison.

The Los Angeles County Sheriff is a bit of an outlier given its significantly larger sworn officer force. The Los Angeles County Sheriff is so large because the office contracts with many of the county’s smaller municipalities to provide basic police service. Los Angeles County and Harris County similarly are responsible for a large population living in unincorporated areas though Los Angeles County has far more municipalities than Harris County. Given these similarities, it makes sense that Harris County’s sheriff officer to population-plus-jobs rate is the second highest and is larger than both that of Dallas County and Cook County. The lower rates for both Dallas and Cook counties are likely shaped by the fact that there is little that is unincorporated in either county.

Houston Police Department

Empowered by state law and local code, the Houston Police Department acts as the primary law enforcement agency for the City of Houston.5 HPD is responsible for general law enforcement duties inside the City of Houston and performs other duties as directed by city government. The agency operates 51 divisions/offices under eight commands and five civilian departments across the more than 600 square miles of the city. HPD is the largest police force in the region and has the largest budget.

HPD’s annual budget was $865 million for FY18—slightly more than a third of Houston’s general fund budget. About 92 percent of HPD’s budget comes from the city’s general fund. (See TischlerBise supporting document.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Population + Jobs</th>
<th>FTE Sworn Officers</th>
<th>FTE Officers / 1,000 Total Population + Jobs</th>
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<tr>
<td>Chicago PD</td>
<td>4,004,831</td>
<td>11,954</td>
<td>2.98</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cook County Sheriff</td>
<td>3,714,832</td>
<td>1,800</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dallas PD</td>
<td>1,899,948</td>
<td>3,279</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dallas County Sheriff</td>
<td>1,832,506</td>
<td>423</td>
<td>0.23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Houston PD</td>
<td>4,135,032</td>
<td>5,182</td>
<td>1.25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Harris County Sheriff</td>
<td>2,925,595</td>
<td>2,540</td>
<td>0.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles PD</td>
<td>5,822,754</td>
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<tr>
<td>Los Angeles County Sheriff</td>
<td>8,943,720</td>
<td>9,316</td>
<td>1.04</td>
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<tr>
<td>New York PD</td>
<td>12,453,578</td>
<td>36,228</td>
<td>2.91</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Notes:
Population-plus-jobs estimates for non-Houston cities and counties come from 2016 ACS estimate for population and employment. Houston and Harris County estimates use H-GAC regional population growth estimates for 2016, which provide a more robust depiction than ACS population and employment estimates.
County estimates are operationalized by subtracting the major city (Chicago for Cook, Dallas for Dallas, Houston for Harris, and Los Angeles for Los Angeles County).
County Sheriff estimates are not directly comparable because of the differences in unincorporated land area, for example, there is little unincorporated land for the Sheriff to patrol in Cook and Dallas counties. Additionally, Los Angeles County provides substantial contract officers to several municipalities.
As Figure 3 showed, HPD spent $205.01 per population-plus-jobs for the 4.2 million people and jobs within the city in 2018. This is by far the largest amount of any large local law enforcement agency—more than doubling the dollar per population-plus-jobs amount that the sheriff devotes to police services (excluding corrections costs).

HPD's organizational structure can be broken down into three main operation areas—Chief's Command, Field Operations, and Investigative and Support Operations. Field Operations ($456.7 million) and Investigative and Support Operations, which houses the city's jail operations ($340.6 million), account for 93 percent of HPD's overall budget. Figure 6 lays out this organization.

The Chief's Command consists primarily of civilian and administrative staff that operate essential support operations and reports to the Office of the Chief of Police. This area consists of administrative support offices including the chief’s office, budget and finance, public affairs, internal affairs, inspections, legal services, crime analysis, planning and command center.

Field Operations is in charge of the more visible front-end law enforcement duties, including homeland security and three regional patrol commands as well as the civilian-operated Office of Planning. HPD patrols all highways and interstates within the city of Houston, excluding toll roads and High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes, which are managed by other entities.

The Investigative and Support Operations command is in charge of specialized back-end operations, including criminal investigations, special investigations, organizational
development and support services commands, as well as the civilian-operated Office of Technology Services.

As one of the two largest law enforcement agencies in the county, HPD is tasked with a wide variety of responsibilities. Accommodating new or shifting responsibilities can be a challenge given ongoing concerns about the declining size of HPD’s police force. The topic of bringing on additional police units for HPD has been a political issue for a number of years and the below average number of sworn officers to population is usually cited in these debates.6

### Harris County Sheriff’s Office

The Harris County Sheriff’s Office patrols in unincorporated areas, though officers have jurisdiction throughout the county, and also operates the county jail system and provides security for the county court system. The elected Sheriff is a requirement of the Texas Constitution.

The sheriff is the second-largest law enforcement agency in the county with an overall budget of $502.4 million in FY17. Expenditures are split approximately 45 percent ($223.7 million) for patrol and administration and 55 percent ($278.7 million) for detention and medical. (See TischlerBise supporting document).

When accounting for patrol and administrative costs, the sheriff devotes $93.97 per population-and-jobs for the 2,380,705 residents and jobs in unincorporated Harris County. Combining patrol, detention and medical budgets, that rate rises to $135.15 per population-and-jobs, still well below the HPD rate. (See Figure 3)

The sheriff has approximately half as many sworn officers as HPD (2,540 compared to 5,119) and slightly more than half as many total employees as HPD (3,385 compared with 6,296). However, the unincorporated area for which the sheriff’s office is responsible has a larger square area and approximately the same population as Houston.7

Indeed, as the Houston annexation system has stalled over the past 20 years, the sheriff has taken on much more patrol responsibility.

The city has not completed any major annexations since the late 1990s, but growth in Harris County has continued unabated. Since 2000, the Houston has added some 300,000 people (a 14 percent increase), increasing from about 1.9 million to 2.2 million in 2017. However, unincorporated Harris County added nearly one million people (a 50 percent increase), going from about one million to just under two million people.8

Of course, most jobs in Harris County are located inside the city limits, thus increasing the policing burden in the city above the sheer population numbers. As Figure 3 suggests above, there are some 1.8 million jobs in Houston but only 485,000 or so in unincorporated Harris County.

Like HPD, the sheriff’s office is heavily dependent on the county general fund. The general fund supports 77.2 percent of the patrol division budget (most of the rest comes from contract deputies) and 96.5 percent of the detention and medical budget for the sheriff. Overall, the sheriff’s budget accounted for 18.4 percent of Harris County’s general fund in FY17.

The sheriff’s organizational structure is broken down into three commands: Executive, Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice commands (see Figure 8).

The executive command, similar to the chief’s command with HPD, oversees all administrative duties and support operations. It also directs diversion programs and internal affairs.

The law enforcement command is composed of all the general law enforcement and law enforcement support operations, including patrol, homeland security, criminal investigations, crime analysis and training, and communication and technology bureaus. The sheriff is responsible for patrolling the highways and interstates within Harris County that are outside of municipal boundaries. They do not patrol tollways.

The criminal justice command, the largest command of the Sheriff’s Office, operates the Harris County Jail System. Detention and medical services are each a part of the Criminal Justice Command in the sheriff’s budget. The command oversees the four operating county jails that house over 8,700 inmates and handles the adminis-
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administrative duties associated with the criminal justice system including managing the courts and prisoner transportation. This command also oversees all medical and health services within the criminal justice system.

The sheriff has law enforcement responsibilities include urban unincorporated areas, homeland security and identity theft. Significantly, the sheriff does not typically patrol in areas within municipal boundaries, deferring instead to the local municipal police, including HPD. Ultimately, though, the sheriff has the authority to operate in any part of Harris County, including inside city limits, as the office does in the vicinity of the downtown Houston jails and justice center.

Harris County Constables

Like the elected sheriff, elected constables are also required by the Texas Constitution. Harris County has eight elected constables, the maximum number permitted for one county under the state constitution. Under Texas statute, constables act as process servers for justice of the peace courts and provide security for those courts, whose precincts coincide with those of the constables.

However, constables may also provide law enforcement services, and in Harris County, constables are among the most active within Texas in taking on additional responsibilities. All eight of the Harris County Constable Offices operate divisions outside of those affiliated with the justice of the peace courts. Combined, the eight constable offices devote hundreds of officers to patrol responsibilities in areas covered by HPD and the sheriff through the Deputy Contract Program.

The constables are well-known in the county for the service they provide to specific neighborhoods under the contract deputy program. But most of their budget comes from the county general fund. In FY17, the eight constable offices combined received $124.5 million per year from the county general fund, approximately 70 percent of their budget, and $43 million from contracts, approximately 30 percent of their budget. (See Figure 9) The remainder of constable...
funding came through a variety of contracts, grants and property seizures. (See TischlerBise supporting document).

Altogether, the constable offices employ a total of 1,530 deputies, of whom 583 (about 40 percent) are paid for at least in part by contracts. The offices spend an average of $24.59 per population-plus-jobs across the county, with a low of $12.75 per population-plus-jobs in Precinct 2 and a high of $56.45 per population-plus-jobs in Precinct 6 (See Figure 3). Appendix B contains extended budget information for each precinct.

In Harris County, the constable offices are coterminous with the precincts for the justice of the peace courts. Each constable precinct houses two justice of the peace courts. The boundaries for these joint constable/justice of the peace precincts, though, are not the same as those for the Harris County Commissioners (see Figure 10). This mismatch of jurisdictions means that a constituent within a given county commissioner precinct might be served by a constable/justice of the peace precinct that primarily overlaps with a different commissioner’s precinct. Such situations can create confusion about which elected officials and law enforcement agencies represent a given resident.

Much of the expansion of the constable offices is rooted in the contract deputy program. But it is also true that the support of the Harris County Commissioners Court for duties beyond the justice of the peace responsibilities have allowed the constable offices to expand their staff.

Constables are able to operate in the entire county, and in some cases contiguous counties as well, but generally operate within their designated county precinct and patrol contract areas. The three largest constable offices are Precinct 1, Precinct 4 and Precinct 5. Precinct 1 encompasses much of the central and west side of Houston. Precincts 4 and 5 are in the quickly growing unincorporated areas of north and northwest Harris County, where municipal utility districts are common. Both the quickly growing population of the region and the ability for MUDs to contract for additional deputies are likely contributing to the size of these precincts. Precincts 1, 4 and 5 also have the most contracts and largest numbers of contract deputies (see Appendix B).

While constable precincts cover the entire county, the ultimate patrol responsibility falls to HPD in Houston and to the sheriff in Harris County. Through contracts with homeowners associations and MUDs, constables have adopted law enforcement duties both inside municipal boundaries and in the unincorporated areas of Harris County. In effect, constables operate overlapping patrol services with the larger agencies. The constable patrols do increase the law enforcement presence in specific geographies, but contract constable deputies are only required to respond to calls within their patrol contract areas and may pass on calls for service outside of those areas. Because of this, the contract constables are not a one-to-one replacement for HPD or sheriff’s deputies who are required to respond to all calls.

The eight constable offices use their general fund budgets to operate in different capacities for their district and offer a wide-ranging degree of services. Some services provided by individual constables have a countywide mandate. All constable offices in Harris County operate patrol and civil divisions, while the three largest agencies (Precincts 1, 4 and 5) offer the majority of additional services, such as K-9 units, tactical response teams and technology crime units. Notably, Precinct 1 operates countywide juvenile warrants, mental health warrants, environmental investigations and animal cruelty divisions. Precinct 4 operates technology crimes, environmental crimes and emissions task forces countywide. Finally, Precinct 5 operates animal and environmental crimes units countywide as well.

Six of the eight constable offices serve as the primary law enforcement units on the Harris County toll roads through contracts with the Toll Road Authority. The constables do not have primary enforcement duties on any other area highways, which are patrolled using general fund money by the sheriff, HPD, small city departments,
FIGURE 10  Harris County Constable and Commissioner Precinct Boundaries
and METRO Police depending upon the roadway. The contract funds for constable service on the tollways are separate from the contract deputy program contracts. These funds appear in the budget as a part of the general fund allotment, not as standalone income.

Again, it is important to emphasize that while the size of the constables’ patrol staff is popularly attributed to the contract deputy program, most of the constables’ funding comes from the county general fund. Because the county commissioners have discretion over funding for law enforcement, they can divide county general fund revenue between the sheriff and the constables however they like. Although the sheriff is the county’s principal law enforcement officer, ultimately responsible for patrolling all unincorporated areas, the commissioners have traditionally given a significant chunk of funding to the constables to support precinct-specific patrol duties.

Because the sheriff’s office is countywide, there is a perception that deputies will not focus in a particular area or county precinct. Constables, on the other hand, can direct non-contract patrol units to focus on particular areas and provide higher levels of service within smaller geographies. County commissioners, therefore, tend to see an advantage in having the constables maintain a flexible and focused patrol presence within the commissioner’s precinct.

### County Contract Deputy Program

Both the sheriff and the constables participate in the contract deputy program.

Harris County is unique in Texas for the use of the contract deputy program. Though local government code allows all Texas counties to permit constables and sheriffs to enter into contracts, among large Texas counties only Harris County has created a program that sees on-duty officers contracted for services. The county has done so since the mid-1980s[^10]. Travis, Dallas, Tarrant and Bexar counties all allow agencies to provide some form of contracting, but in these other counties the work is limited to off-duty officers or contracts for service with entire cities.

### Figure 11: Overview of FY17 Contract Deputy Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contracts</th>
<th>Total Deputies</th>
<th>Revenue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constable</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>583</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheriff</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>266</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[^10]: Travis, Dallas, Tarrant and Bexar counties all allow agencies to provide some form of contracting, but in these other counties the work is limited to off-duty officers or contracts for service with entire cities.
FIGURE 13
FY17 Deputy Patrol Contracts in Harris County and Median Household Income
Although both the sheriff and constables are eligible for the contract deputy program, the majority of these contracts go to the constable offices because of the perception that they can provide more effective “boutique” service. Of the 298 contracts in place for FY17, 63 percent (189) go to seven of the constable offices (Precinct 8 carries no deputy service contracts), while 37 percent (109) go to the sheriff. Contract deputies account for approximately 40 percent of all constable deputies (583 out of 1,530). At the sheriff’s office, contract deputies account for approximately 10 percent of all sworn personnel (266 out of 2,540). Contracts provide funding for about 23 percent of all county sworn personnel. The constable’s contracts support officers at a number of ranks, including deputies (520), sergeants (55), and lieutenants (8). The sheriff’s contracts support just sergeants (4) and deputies (262). The higher ranking officers come with higher salaries, so in many cases contracts with constables are for higher fees. Figure 11 breaks down the contract deputies.

Funding for these contracts is divided along the same lines, with constables receiving approximately $43 million in contract revenue in FY17 and the sheriff receiving approximately $18 million. Figure 12 shows how the funding for both agencies is divided between general fund and contracts.

Most contracts within the program do not cover the full costs of the officer. Current contracts for both the sheriff and the constables require contracting entities to pay at least 70 percent of a contract officer’s time and the remaining 30 percent comes from county general funds. The majority of contract deputies (60 percent of contracted constable deputies and 96 percent of contracted sheriff deputies) are on 70-30 agreements. In cases where the county is paying for a portion of a contract officer’s time, the officer devotes the county’s share of his or her time to general duties.

Overall, the constables are far more dependent on contracts than the sheriff. Contracts make up 24 percent of the overall constable budget but only 8 percent of the sheriff’s patrol and administration budget.

The breakdown of the city’s annexation system has clearly contributed to the demand for contracts from both the sheriff’s office and the constables. Nearly 80 percent of current contracts involve locations outside the city, as shown by Figure 13 and 14. Almost all the sheriff’s contracts are outside of the city of Houston in unincorporated areas. In FY17, the sheriff’s office held only two of the 66 contracts with homeowners associations within the city of Houston. The constables hold the remaining 64 contracts within the city, as well as others throughout the county.

Significantly, Figure 13 reveals that most contract deputies work in affluent areas, especially inside the city, where most contracts are located in the so-called “Golden Arrow” in the western portion of the city near major job centers such as the Texas Medical Center and Uptown.

In short, a large portion of the county’s sworn officer force is currently assigned to specific geographical areas based on contract requirements, not on overall patrol need.

Proponents of the contract deputy program argue that the overlapping of patrols created by the contract system frees up both sheriff and HPD units to patrol non-contract areas. However, the presence of constable patrols does not remove responsibility from the larger entities. As lead agencies, HPD and the sheriff are still ultimately responsible to respond to all calls within their jurisdictions.

While the contracts undoubtedly provide important revenue and support more police officers in general, it is difficult to assess the impact the extra officers have on patrol responsibilities outside of contract areas and what, if any, deployment flexibility the program creates for the larger agencies.

### Specialized Forces

While the large law enforcement forces get most of the attention, several specialized forces operate within Harris County. These departments, which operate on public transit, in schools and universities and in other spaces, are often perceived to be a duplication of service and are often the target of consolidation discussions. In Houston, HPD has undertaken consolidations of smaller departments, including parks and airport police. In both cases, HPD was able to develop specialized divisions within their structure and did not encounter major jurisdictional overlap.
hurdles because all three departments were originally a part of the City of Houston.

However, the idea of consolidating specialized agencies with larger, more general agencies is complicated by the fact that specialized forces have a focused, single mission which may not be easily replicated by larger forces. The case for a specialized agency rather than a specialized department within a larger agency rests on jurisdiction and the parent organization's mission and goals. A specialized department, as opposed to a specialized division, works better when the parent organization operates across multiple government jurisdictions, as many transit authorities do. When the parent organization is multi-jurisdictional, the law enforcement department must work across diverse jurisdictions and geographies. Consolidating with a larger municipal agency would make cross-jurisdictional work more difficult.

**METRO Police Department**

In Texas, transit police departments are specialized law enforcement agencies empowered by the Texas Transportation Code. In the Houston region, the local transit agency is the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County, or simply, METRO. The METRO Police Department is the only transit authority police department in the region. The primary purpose of METRO Police is to safeguard the parent transit agency, its customers and employees.

METRO Police has full policing power in Harris, Montgomery, Fort Bend and Waller counties. The extent of the department's powers is unique among transit agency police departments. Most departments have limited powers directly related to the transit system. However, because METRO's jurisdiction extends into multiple counties, METRO Police has policing powers in all of them. This allows the agency to act as a natural regional law enforcement collaborator.

The department has an annual budget of $26 million and is funded through METRO's sales tax. The METRO Police budget represents about 2.5 percent of the agency's total annual budget. The department has 336 full time employees and 191 sworn officers. It spends $3.60 per population-and-jobs in its service area. (See Figure 2)

While Metro has concurrent jurisdiction with other law enforcement agencies, METRO Police acts as the primary law enforcement agency for incidents involving METRO vehicles and facilities, including the High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) network on local highways. The HOV lanes are the only part of the highway network where METRO Police is the primary law enforcement agency.

METRO's approach is one of two ways that transit agencies provide law enforcement service. Similar to METRO, many agencies, such as BART in San Francisco and WMATA in Washington, D.C., operate standalone police departments. Other transit authorities, such as Sound Transit in Seattle, contract with local law enforcement to provide security.

**School District Police Departments**

There are 25 school districts in Harris County, not including charter and private schools. Of the 25 school districts, 13 districts operate their own police department. (See Figure 16)

Standalone police departments for school districts are allowed in most states, but usually only very large school districts have them. The majority of districts with law enforcement officers in schools employ school resource officers (SROs), who are contracted from other local departments and provide the same general duties as a school district police officers. Houston and Harris County are an exception to these trends.

Independent school district police departments function as the primary law enforcement agencies for their school district and provide community policing, crime prevention programs and alcohol and drug awareness programs. Specialized school district police departments allow officers to conduct specialized investigations around school threats rather than relying on the investigations team of a larger city or countywide agency. These school law enforcement agencies are empowered by Chapter 37 of the Texas Education Code and are allowed to have a jurisdiction up to their entire school district boundaries.

The police departments in 13 school districts in Harris County collectively employ over 700 sworn officers and al-
FIGURE 16
Harris County School Districts with Standalone Police Force

Harris County School Districts

- District with Police Force
- District without Police Force

Date Created: 7/17/2018
Source: Harris County Appraisal District
most 200 additional employees. The ratio of spending and officers per 1,000 population-plus-jobs (which for ISDs is calculated by combining student population and staff numbers) is fairly consistent across the 13 departments.

On average, the ISD police departments spend $96.23 per 1,000 population-plus-jobs and have an average sworn officer per population-plus-jobs rate of 0.98 per 1,000 (See Appendix C). While the agencies are full-service law enforcement agencies, they employ a significantly lower number of sworn officers than municipal departments. The spending numbers are on par with other local agencies such as the sheriff, but the overall officer to population-plus-jobs rate is slightly lower than that of other area departments including those of the smaller cities, the sheriff and HPD.

The total budget for security and monitoring services, a category reported by all school districts, includes expenses for maintaining safety on campus, in transit to campus and surrounding areas for all students and staff. These figures include police, security and crossing guard expenses. Generally, school districts spend 1.2 percent of general funds towards security and monitoring expenses.

The Houston Independent School District (HISD) is the largest school district in the region and operates its own police department. HISD PD has 232 full-time employees, including 203 police officers, and acts as the primary law enforcement agency for incidents at HISD schools and facilities. On top of the regular ISD police operations, HISD also operates a K-9 unit. The HISD PD's budget is $179 million, which is 0.71 percent of HISD's overall budget of $2.5 billion. HISD PD spends $83.57 per student. Note these figures are strictly for the police budget which is smaller than the security and monitoring services in Figure 17.

While these agencies generally do not overlap in services with other police agencies, they can often supplement the services of municipal police departments by providing additional patrols in the neighborhoods around the schools they are patrolling. For example, HPD has entered into memorandums of understanding with HISD PD to patrol public park areas adjacent to school properties.

### Small City Police Departments

Of the 33 smaller cities in Harris County, 29 have their own police agencies. These agencies are responsible for general law enforcement duties within their jurisdiction as well as for patrolling highways and interstates within their municipal boundaries.

Combined, these small cities spend $238 million on law enforcement, largely funded through their respective general funds. The average budget for the smaller police departments is $8.2 million. The lowest budget of the smaller cities is that of the Shoreacres Police Department, which uses $631,629 to support six officers who serve 1,624 residents. The largest budget of the smaller cities is the Pasadena Police Department, which has a $37.7 million budget for 268 officers serving a population of 220,000 people. (See Appendix D)

Appendix D contains a full breakdown of the smaller city PDs budgets. These agencies devote an average of $197.09 per population-plus-jobs, a rate close to that of HPD. There is huge variance within those rates, though, ranging from a minimum of $136 per population-plus-jobs in Galena Park to a maximum of $1,851 per population-plus-jobs in Morgan's Point. Additionally, these agencies have an average officer to population-plus-jobs rate of 1.27 per 1,000, again similar to HPD. There is again a great deal of variation from a low of 0.88 officers per 1,000 population-plus-jobs in League City to a maximum of 5.70 officers per 1,000 population-plus-jobs in Morgan's Point.

While the sworn officers of the 29 smaller municipalities contribute significantly to the number of officers in the region, it is important to remember their operations are largely restricted to the municipality they serve. Their
presence does not alleviate the strain the sheriff and constables face in patrolling growing communities in unincorporated Harris County.

**Existing Overlapping Services**

In addition to the various overlaps in patrol duties demonstrated in the discussion above, several other overlapping services currently exist among law enforcement agencies in Harris County. These include the following:

— *Separate evidence and property rooms.* Evidence, or property, rooms, are secure areas law enforcement agencies maintain to store seized and stolen property, as well as any collected evidence for criminal cases. In Harris County, nearly all of the several dozen law enforcement agencies maintain at least a transitional evidence room, keeping property for a short time period before transferring it to the sheriff’s main evidence room. Some maintain fully functioning evidence rooms and do not transfer materials to the sheriff’s primary facility.

— *Separate training facilities.* Currently, there are multiple training facilities run by different agencies spread across Harris County. The size of the county means that many facilities are situated far away from some agencies, which deters their shared use. For example, HPD’s police academy and major training facility is near George Bush Intercontinental Airport, meaning any smaller agency to the southeast wanting to send officers to train there would lose a number of officer hours in transit. A lack of coordination on existing facilities has led many agencies to create their own facilities. The sharing of training facilities is done on an ad hoc basis.

— *Separate 911 response systems.* 911 calls are processed at what are called public safety answering points (PSAPs). These centers are usually operated by law enforcement agencies or city/county emergency management entities. There is no limit on the number of PSAPs that can operate within a county. Most sizable departments operate their own PSAP and absorb the administrative costs that come with it. Harris County and the City of Houston each operate 911 call centers. Most smaller law enforcement agencies operate their own as well, including the cities of Katy, Humble and Pasadena.

However, public safety entities are not required to operate a PSAP. Many smaller agencies and specialized law enforcement entities have agreements to use the PSAPs of larger entities to relay calls to their office. In those cases, the primary PSAP that receives the call redirects it to the secondary agency for service. This contract arrangement reduces the administrative and facilities costs to smaller agencies.

— *Fragmented highway patrol.* There are several agencies responsible for managing Harris County’s highway system. Within incorporated municipal boundaries, the principal municipal agency patrols the highways; in unincorporated Harris County, the sheriff patrols the highways; toll road responsibility is shared in varying segments between the constables; and HOV lanes are under the authority of METRO Police.

— *Unconnected technology systems and procurement processes.* Police departments and the criminal justice system are increasingly using arrest, crime and other data to improve service and improve public safety. However, this information is usually siloed and hard to access across departments because nearly every agency in Harris County maintains its own data. Similarly, every department does its own procurement for technology systems and software because few collaborative procurement systems have figured out ways to include technology purchases.
Options for Consolidation and Coordination

Given the vast law enforcement infrastructure and considerable overlap in Harris County, several possible approaches to consolidation and coordination are available—some more realistic than others. These include:

1. **Consolidate Governmental Entities**
   1-1. Consolidate City of Houston and Harris County government.
   1-2. Merge HPD and METRO Police.
   1-3. Consolidate contiguous, smaller police agencies.

2. **Consolidate within Governments**
   2-1. Consolidate or rearrange duties between sheriff and constables.
   2-2. Align constable/justice of the peace precincts with county commissioner precincts.

3. **Consolidate Functions**
   3-1. Shift highway patrol responsibility to reduce number of involved agencies.
   3-2. Consolidate overlapping functions, especially between city and county.
   3-3. Share technology costs and systems between agencies.

Different opportunities within these three general options are discussed in the remainder of this report. In general, the discussion moves within each category from the most difficult options to the more implementable. For each category, we discuss the options, offer a number of ways to pursue the options, list pros and cons and give case studies where pertinent.

### 1. Consolidate Government Entities

One of the more controversial approaches to streamlining law enforcement and public safety services is to consolidate agencies, typically called a full consolidation. This method can be done in two ways: (1) by first consolidating separate governments, such as a city and county, and then moving to consolidate two previously standalone agencies, or (2) by consolidating separate law enforcement agencies into one to serve a multi-jurisdictional area.

#### 1-1. Consolidate City of Houston and Harris County Government

In several large cities—including Nashville, Indianapolis and Louisville—the city and county government have merged into one metropolitan government. In each of these cases police services were ultimately consolidated as well. The goals of these consolidations are typically to streamline services that are duplicative, clarify regional responsibilities, create cost savings and structure a tax-sharing approach that helps distribute resources more evenly.

The overall efficacy of such mergers has been a hotly debated topic for decades. Major examples such as Nashville-Davidson County and Indianapolis’ Unigov are held up as successes for the regional coordination and economic development strengths. However, sometimes even these selling points are not complete successes. Nashville-Davidson County has created a streamlined system for regional roles, but the metropolitan area also contains several municipalities that maintain autonomy and independent municipal powers. Likewise, prominent failed city-county consolidation efforts such as that abandoned by the City of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County in North Carolina during the 1990s, stalled because of concerns about declining political power for certain populations and doubts about actual savings.

The efficacy of police department consolidation as a part of larger mergers has also created debate. In some places, large consolidated forces have been criticized for slower response times. While Charlotte-Mecklenburg did not completely merge city and county, the two governments did merge city and county police, forming the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department in 1993. The department has responsibility for serving all parts of the city of Charlotte within Mecklenburg County. This distinction leaves small parts of the unincorporated county out of its service area. Traditionally, the county has contracted with
the police department to provide service to these areas, but in recent years complaints about level of service from the large agency have led to calls for new arrangements.\textsuperscript{15}

There is also research that indicates consolidation into large police forces creates higher costs because of their sheer size and difficulty with managing a large force. These findings have been borne out in some mergers.\textsuperscript{16} In Indianapolis, for example, the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department was created through the merger of the Indianapolis Police Force and Marion County Sheriff in 2005. The justification given was that there would be better service and costs savings created due to greater staff and administrative efficiencies. The consolidation is a success functionally—service is relatively stable—but the administrative savings predicted, $8.8 million annually, did not emerge due to unforeseen administrative and salary costs, equipment updates and contract and lease costs.\textsuperscript{17}

Beyond the debated benefits of full city-county consolidation, two factors make full consolidation of city and county government extremely unlikely in Harris County. The first is the fact that the territorial boundaries of the City of Houston extend into Fort Bend and Montgomery counties. The second is the fact that Harris County contains more than 30 other cities besides the City of Houston and consolidation would strand them as smaller jurisdictions.

**1-2. Merge Houston Police Department and METRO Police Department**

As highlighted in the City of Houston’s 10-year plan for fiscal sustainability produced in November 2017 by PFM, the merging of the METRO Police with the HPD is an option that has been discussed locally for a number of years.\textsuperscript{18} HPD consolidated with both the Houston Parks Police (1984) and the Houston Airport Police (1992), which, prior to consolidation, were separate entities controlled by the City of Houston.

One issue with this possible consolidation is that transit authority departments, similar to other specialized law enforcement agencies, have a specific mission tied to the transit authority itself. While it is entirely possible for a city or larger police force to offer law enforcement services to a transit authority, this could deteriorate the quality of service because the goals of the larger agency may not coincide with the transit authority.

A merger between METRO Police and HPD creates a path for additional similar mergers that could be considered with other specialized agencies including independent school district departments, departments at community colleges or other universities, and other entities such as the Texas Medical Center or Port of Houston.

**Pros:**

- Increase deployment flexibility for HPD both along transit lines and in general patrol by adding former METRO officers to ranks.
- Reduce number of overlapping agencies within the City of Houston.
- Reduce administrative and staffing costs for METRO by removing law enforcement responsibilities.

**Cons:**

- Negotiation of jurisdictional boundaries and responsibilities could be difficult given that METRO’s jurisdiction expands beyond the City of Houston in Harris County and into parts of Fort Bend County. HPD would have to create new arrangements with other agencies.
- Loss of focused police service provided by specialized law enforcement. METRO Police currently tailors training and response to transit-specific scenarios.
- Combination of contracts and unions could be difficult, but earlier consolidations show it is not impossible.

**Case Study:**

The best example of a complete transit agency police department and city police department merger is the City of New York. The New York Police Department took over both transit and public housing policing in 1995. The transit consolidation was successful after a deal was struck to maintain the same sized patrol force on the transit system. The transit police transitioned from a standalone agency into a new transit bureau under NYPD.\textsuperscript{19} The move allowed the NYPD to have more officers available for general duties and allowed them to continue to patrol the specialized jurisdiction of the transit system. Some former specialized officers contended the merger gave them greater authority because transit police were often perceived to be second-class.\textsuperscript{20}
1-3. Consolidate contiguous, smaller municipal police agencies

Harris County contains 34 municipalities, with the City of Houston by far the largest. Of these, 30 municipalities maintain their own police forces. In several cases, this cost is a major piece of their municipal budget. In places where smaller municipalities border one another, merger of police departments may be prudent.

There are several candidates within the Houston area for such consolidations. The Villages area contains several standalone municipalities and multiple police departments. Piney Point, Bunker Hill and Hunters Creek created a shared police department in 1977, but others such as Hedwig Village maintain their own department. All four cities have populations of between 2,500 and 4,000.

Similarly, the cities of West University Place, Southside Place and Bellaire all border one another and each maintains their own police department. West University and Bellaire have populations of approximately 15,000, while Southside Place has a population of 1,700.

The biggest potential benefits of mergers would be a reduction in the cost of maintaining the administration and operations of individual departments. For example, Bellaire, West University Place and Southside Place all maintain their own jail facilities. Consolidation could allow for joining of those facilities.

Numerous studies have shown that such mergers of smaller departments can have major benefits and that they do not suffer from the same level of service declines that can impact larger consolidations.21

Pros:
- Reduce administrative and operations costs for multiple departments.
- Improve service in smaller departments by providing economies of scale.
- Reduce number of jurisdictions and agencies.

Cons:
- Concern that city taxes will support needs in other jurisdictions.
- Consolidating just police departments without consolidating overall functions of the cities may be challenging.
- Perceived decrease in level of service for some residents.

2. Consolidate within Governments

Another form of consolidation is to merge agencies that operate within the same hierarchical government. These consolidations are often the most feasible since the agencies are already a part of the overarching parent government. The consolidation of the parks and airport police departments into the Houston Police Department is an example of such a move.

2-1. Consolidate or rearrange duties between Sheriff and Constables.

The sheriff and the constables each provide a wide range of law enforcement responsibilities. Many of their duties, especially patrol responsibilities, overlap. The agencies have similar funding structures with primary support coming from the county’s general fund and with supplementary funding coming through patrol contracts with MUDs, HOAs and other private entities.

Since the Harris County Commissioners Court supports both entities, that body could work to consolidate the responsibilities of the sheriff and constables in a way that leads to greater law enforcement service equity and possibly cost savings as well. There are several paths through which such a consolidation could be pursued.

Options include the following:

A. Merge the Constable Offices into the Sheriff’s Office.

Though this move might meet significant opposition, there is precedent for it in Texas. Three counties (Mills, Reagan and Roberts) abolished their constables and
moved those functions to their sheriffs in 1995. However, those counties are tiny in comparison to Harris County.

Collectively, the constables have an annual budget of $176 million. The commissioners court provides $124 million of that funding from the general fund and $43 million comes from the 189 Contract Deputy agreements the Constables hold. The remainder comes from various grants, services and seizures.

If a consolidation of the constable offices into the sheriff’s office occurred, it is likely that most of the operational costs would be maintained in order to ensure a consistent level of service. The only responsibility the sheriff would take on that it currently has no role in would be civil process and court protection. This move could be done by making the constables’ civil units into a division of the sheriff and maintaining the general operational structure.

The site of the greatest potential savings would be on the administration side, where the constables currently spend $47 million a year (See Appendix B). It is difficult to estimate how much of the $47 million would be saved in the consolidation, but it is safe to say there would be efficiencies in reducing overlapping administrative operations given that there are currently nine independently operating agencies with parallel staffs.

Pros:

- Consolidate all county-controlled law enforcement responsibility into one agency, streamlining services, removing perceptions of duplication and saving administrative costs.
- Simplify the county budgeting process for law enforcement.
- Increase patrol and deployment flexibility for the Sheriff by bringing constable officers and resources into the sheriff’s budget.

Cons:

- Perceived decline in level of service, especially in areas where the constables currently patrol on contract.
- There would be a substantial upfront cost in rebranding patrol vehicles, purchasing uniforms, and installing new trainings.
- Politically difficult given that constables are elected officials and that the agencies are seen as important contributors to public safety by many residents and officials.
Collaborations and Overlapping Services in Harris County Law Enforcement

Consolidating patrol responsibilities within the sheriff’s office would mean moving that $127 million into the sheriff’s budget and potentially increasing the number of patrol units at the sheriff’s control by 1,500 officers. The largest likely savings would be in the reduction of administrative costs for both agencies. The constables would reduce their administrative needs considerably since patrol administration accounts for a huge proportion of each precinct’s work. While the sheriff would be adding responsibilities, there would likely be efficiencies and savings created by eliminating or reducing duplicative administrative services.

Pros:
- Focus constables on duty as officers of the court, civil process servers and other non-patrol functions.
- Save administrative costs for patrol divisions.

Cons:
- Perceived decline in level of service, especially in areas where the constables currently patrol on contract.
- Reduce ability of law enforcement to tailor actions for specific jurisdictions or geographies.

C. Make all contracts 100 percent responsibility of contracting entity

Current contract deputy program arrangements require contracting entities to pay somewhere between 70 and 100 percent of a deputy’s time. The Harris County General Fund is used to cover the remaining costs of any officers whose positions are not completely paid for by the contract. If all contracting entities were required to pay the full salary of their contract deputies, it would reduce the amount of general funds dedicated to law enforcement.

Figure 20 displays the breakdown of the contract deputy financial agreements for FY17. In the average contract with a constable, the contracting entity covers 75 percent of the full cost, leaving the county with 25 percent of the burden. In the average contract with the sheriff, the contracting entity covers 70 percent of the total cost for deputies, leaving the county to cover 30 percent of the burden.

For illustrative purposes, setting the average county subsidy for constable contracts at 25 percent and the county subsidy for sheriff contracts at 30 percent, Figure 21 estimates total county support for the contract deputy program at just over $22 million. If contracts were shifted to 100 percent support by the contracting agencies, this would be an immediate savings for Harris County.

Pros:
- Reduce costs to general funds for both sheriff and constable contracts.
- Allow contracted deputies to concentrate full-time on one area.

Cons:
- Does not address equity of coverage issue. Wealthier communities can still purchase desired level of service.
- Remove the added benefit of having deputies split their time between contract areas and general duties.
Case Study:

Bergen County, New Jersey, a New York City suburb of almost one million people, consolidated its standalone county police force, the Bergen County Police, into the Bergen County Sheriff’s office in 2015. This example is perhaps the most similar to the idea of merging the Harris County Sheriff’s Office and Harris County Constables.

Prior to the Bergen County merger, the sheriff had 152 patrol deputies and the county police, which primarily provided safety on highways, had 103 deputies. Under the merger plan, the county police became a division of the sheriff and county police personnel was expected to decline through attrition to 49 deputies. Between this reduction, reduced administrative costs and replacement of sworn personnel with civilians in central operations such as dispatch, the merger plan was expected to save between $90 million and $200 million over 25 years. Eventually, some county police officers were laid off because of budgetary constraints and because the cost of county police officers was much higher than the cost of sheriff’s deputies. A full accounting for the financial savings has not occurred.

2-2. Realign Constable/Justice of the Peace Districts with County Commissioner Precincts

The last major redistricting of constable/justice of the peace precincts in Harris County was in 1973. There is no connection between constable/justice of the peace precincts and commissioner’s precincts.

The lack of redistricting has led to significant differences within the precincts. Precincts 1, 4 and 5 each have more than one million people and jobs; indeed, Precinct 5 has almost two million people and jobs. By contrast, Precinct 6 has only about 160,000 people and jobs. This discrepancy leads to overloaded dockets for the justices of the peace and vastly different responsibilities for the constables. It can also affect level of service experienced by residents. The fact that the constable boundaries differ from the commissioner boundaries also leads to frequent confusion as to which constable serves a particular area.

The commissioners court could redistrict the constable/justice of the peace precincts at the next decennial redistricting. Two constables’ precincts and four justice of the peace precincts could be “nested” within each commissioner precinct.

Pros:
- Create more evenly weighted precincts and workloads.
- Provide residents with greater clarity about their representation.

Cons:
- Could create confusion or complicate existing contracts with Constables.

3. Consolidate Functions

Functional consolidation occurs when two or more standalone departments merge smaller parts of their organizations, say a single division or office such as a SWAT operation, or when they share facilities or services, such as administrative functions, dispatch or records management.

The goal of this method of consolidation is to eliminate administrative costs for services that would have no substantive impact on the quality of law enforcement services. In many instances, smaller agencies consolidate a service to create economies of scale and provide services they would not have been able to provide alone.

3-1. Shift highway patrol responsibility to reduce number of involved agencies

Traffic crashes on area highways not only cause major headaches for commuters and commerce, they also complicate the operations of local law enforcement. Major incidents often lead to patrol officers being removed from their normal beats to respond. In addition, law enforcement on the highways around the Houston metropolitan region is carried out by a mixture of agencies.

Sheriff deputies patrol all non-tollways within Harris County but outside of Houston. HPD patrols all non-tollways within Houston. Harris County constables patrol all tollways via a contractual arrangement with the Harris County Toll Road Authority (HCTRA). Smaller city departments monitor the non-tollways that cross their jurisdictions. METRO Police is responsible for enforcement on all High Occupancy Vehicle lanes within their jurisdiction. And, when moving beyond the county lines, the Texas State Highway Patrol takes over management of rural highways. (See Figure 22)

This complicated enforcement picture could benefit from streamlining. Not only would such a set of moves allow some agencies to free up funds and personnel for other matters, but it could also help improve overall mobility for the region.
FIGURE 22  Countywide Highway Patrol Responsibilities
The existence of Houston TranStar, an already well-proven regional body that manages regional traffic issues and emergency situations, offers the chance to consider ways to consolidate traffic management and highway enforcement. TranStar is a collaboration between the Texas Department of Transportation, the City of Houston, Harris County, and METRO. Currently the four entities use TranStar to monitor traffic on highways and public transit. The center monitors the region's closed-circuit cameras, collects real-time traffic information and provides it to road users and dispatches vehicles from partner organizations to incidents on area roadways.

There are two major collaborations between partner agencies worth highlighting as exemplary partnerships—the Motorist Assistance Program (MAP) and Tow and Go (formerly SafeClear). Map is jointly operated by METRO and the sheriff. MAP staff respond to minor vehicle issues such as flat tires and minor engine issues on all area highways, excluding Harris County Toll Road Authority tollways.

The Tow and Go program was launched in July 2018 and offers streamlined towing services at no cost to drivers. It replaces SafeClear, a program operated by HPD and the City of Houston with federal funding made available through the Houston Galveston Area Council since 2005. Tow and Go is currently operating on camera-monitored highways within Houston and will be put into place on HOV lanes and other county highways in coming year. The program is operated by TranStar. The program has standing contracts with towing companies for specific road segments and vehicle operators who use the system are presented with clear pricing structures. It currently does not operate on the tollways.

The goal of each of these programs is to enable the quick removal of disabled vehicles and promote the free flow of traffic.

A functional consolidation of highway divisions across the region is possible, but, similar to full consolidation of the sheriff and HPD, is unlikely politically and logistically. In order for a complete consolidation of highway patrols to occur, the sheriff would likely need to absorb all highway enforcement. Just as with full consolidation of the departments, because the City of Houston includes pieces of three counties, the sheriff could not likely take over all of HPD's highway responsibilities.

Options for shifting existing coverage include:

A. **Harris County Sheriff’s Office takes over Harris County Toll Road Authority responsibilities and monitors all highways outside of the City of Houston.**

(Could be done independently of full merger between sheriff and constables)

As a part of any consolidation of patrol divisions, the sheriff could take over responsibility for toll roads as well. This could also be done independent of any consolidation of sheriff and constable patrols. This would require a negotiation with HCTRA to move enforcement contracts to the sheriff.

Most major tollway systems including the New York Thruway and the Chicago Toll System are monitored by state highway patrols or other state agencies. Given the restrictions on the Texas State Highway Patrol to rural highways, this is an unlikely option in Houston and Harris County, leaving the Sheriff as the best potential partner for all highways in unincorporated Harris County.

**Pros:**
- Remove an agency from management of the region’s highway system.
- Provide more funding to sheriff to hire additional officers or bring constable deputies into the sheriff’s office.
- Remove a layer of responsibility from constables and allows them to focus on other roles.

**Cons:**
- Could lead to perceived decline in level of service on area tollways.
- Reduce funding stream to constables.

B. **Houston Police Department and the sheriff take over enforcement of HOV lanes from METRO Police**

(Could be done independently of full merger between HPD and METRO)

Currently, METRO Police manages the HOV lanes throughout its jurisdiction. HPD could take over this work within the city limits of Houston and through the smaller municipalities within Houston. A similar shift could happen outside of Houston with the sheriff taking over responsibility there.
This type of responsibility shift is likely to only work with HPD or the sheriff taking over METRO responsibility. While METRO could take over all highway responsibilities away from the other agencies, it would require a significant increase in funding and officers. Further, though transit agency police departments, including METRO, are excellent regional collaborators, such a move would require taking on responsibilities far beyond an agency’s core mission.

There are few examples of transit agency departments and major cities departments cooperating on enforcement within HOV lanes. Like tollways, most HOV lanes are monitored by state agencies as is the case in the Los Angeles area with the California Highway Patrol. Other transit agency police departments do manage HOV lanes. Dallas and the Dallas Area Rapid Transit authority is the best corollary to METRO.

Any arrangement to allow HPD or the sheriff to monitor HOV lanes would have to be extended to allow officers to respond to highway incidents on HOV lanes within smaller cities within Harris County as well.

Pros:
- Continue to build from the success of the regional TranStar model.
- Reduce costs to METRO Police to monitor and staff HOV lanes. Allows agency to put resources toward other responsibilities.
- Remove an agency from management of the region’s highway system.
- Rationalize the response to all incidents within Houston to HPD and outside of city limits to the sheriff.

Cons:
- Loss of expertise from METRO Police who has successfully managed the HOV lane network.

C. Ensure that MAP program and Tow and Go serve all Harris County highways, including tollways.

The existing programs should be expanded to include the HCTRA tollways and all highways within Harris County. This could be done either through a larger consolidation of patrol responsibilities (i.e., if the sheriff takes over HCTRA contracts, they would then be included in MAP) or by ensuring Tow and Go is expanded to tollways.

Pros:
- Build out a set of successful programs to improve traffic management on area highways.
- Build on successful collaborations between local agencies.

Cons:
- Require new funding for expansion of Tow and Go operations on tollways.

3-2. Consolidate Overlapping Functions, especially between City and County

Complete consolidation of the city and county government is not the only option for consolidation of law enforcement services. Smaller, functional consolidations are also an option.

These options may also be more politically palatable because they do not require police forces to give up as much control or resources as full realignments would. Several potential areas for consolidation of facilities or shared services appear promising.

A. Establish a central evidence room for all agencies in Harris County

Evidence and property rooms are an essential component of justice and law enforcement systems. In Harris County, nearly every independent police force has at least a transitional evidence room, where evidence is held before being transferred to a larger agency, and most maintain separate, fully-functioning evidence rooms and incur all the costs that come with it.

The primary concerns about consolidating evidence rooms are tied to worries about liability for lost or compromised evidence in someone else’s custody and general loss of control over evidence related to a department’s arrests.

These concerns are amplified in Houston because of recent high-profile issues with evidence rooms that have occurred locally. In 2016, for example, HPD’s evidence room had a sprinkler issue that destroyed 15,000 pieces of evidence. Similarly, a major issue arose when evidence for several pending cases was destroyed from the Harris County Precinct 4 Constable offices over the course of several years. Such incidents give many department leaders pause when considering consolidation.
However, it is clear that incidents can occur at any level of evidence room and that maintaining individual units does not guarantee evidence’s security from accident or willful misuse. The combination of evidence rooms could create major savings and efficiencies. A centralized property and evidence room system would allow for individual agencies to divert more funds to other operations or simply reduce costs. The centralized system could be independently funded at the county level with individual law enforcement agencies contributing a maintenance fee. A centralized system would be easier to manage, maintain accountability, and keep up-to-date on the latest standards.

Pros:

- Reduce overlapping administrative, operations and maintenance costs.
- A shared cost structure and governance model would allow all parties to collaborate in the operation of the evidence room.
- Allow for clearer communication between local agencies and the district attorney.
- Establish a consistent standard for all evidence and cases across the county.

Cons:

- Loss of control and autonomy for local agencies.

**Case Study:**

Local examples show that combining evidence rooms is not impossible. Currently, Constable Precinct 5 operates a “transitional” evidence room, collecting evidence and filing it under EvidenceOnQ, a property and evidence management system, and moving evidence on a weekly basis into larger county and city property rooms. Additionally, after Hurricane Harvey devastated the region, damage to the Precinct 4 Constable Office’s Cypresswood building prompted evidence to be moved into other facilities, including county property rooms. The ability of two of the three largest constable offices to quickly transition into a provisional centralized system speaks significantly to the viability of this option.

**B. Shared Training Facilities**

Police departments have a wide variety of training facility needs from firing ranges to space to conduct scenario trainings to storage and maintenance needs. Further, all law enforcement officers are required to take continuing educational and tactical trainings. Local agencies have been amenable to sharing training facilities and course materials either through contracts or MOUs, but the practice is not widespread. For example, METRO contributed $500,000 towards the Houston Community College Public Safety Institute training facilities in 2010. In exchange, METRO Police officers can be trained at the facility.

Opening and maintaining facilities is very costly; sharing the cost burden of new facilities could be beneficial to agencies throughout the region. The creation of a network of shared facilities could help reduce costs. Additionally, being more intentional and systematic about the actual training processes could help to streamline and standardize local police training.

To support this effort, agencies within the region could pay a subscription fee for both the facility costs and for the training materials based on the size of their respective agencies, with the largest agency or a third party operating the actual facility.

Pros:

- Share costs of facilities and training, reducing costs for all involved.
- Reduce the administrative, operations, and maintenance costs of the several repetitive facilities.

Cons:

- Require coordination and agreement on facility needs, as well as clarity on which agency is ultimately responsible for the facility.
- In a region as large as Houston and Harris County, siting of facilities can present a challenge.

**Case Study:**

The City of Houston and Harris County Joint Processing Center, slated to be completed in 2018, is an example of the savings created by shared facilities. The city and county split the capital costs of the center, which cut the cost to either entity trying to pursue a project on its own. The City of Houston will pay an annual fee to process HPD arrests through the center, but the project allows the city to close its jail facilities. This move creates approximately $3 million in savings per year and frees up 100 officers to play a different role within HPD. 26
C. Consider the creation of a central dispatch system within Harris County

The 911 dispatch system involves a great deal of overlap. A central dispatch system could create efficiencies and savings.

Given the large territories that HPD and the sheriff cover, their potential merger makes the most sense. However, given recent investments from both entities, including relatively new facilities, it is unlikely that either entity would be willing to consolidate processes and staff in the immediate future. However, longer-term discussion of this possibility, similar to the Joint Processing Center, could begin now with an eye toward the next set of decisions about dispatch administration in the future.

Small police departments could look to consolidate their PSAPs. This could occur more easily between contiguous jurisdictions to keep dispatch relatively simple.

Pros:
- Reduce administrative, facilities and operations costs.
- Streamline the dispatch process by reducing the number of agencies touching a single call.

Cons:
- Perceived loss of control over dispatch responsibilities.
- Large existing investments in facilities make direct consolidation more difficult.

Case Study:
In 2015, Will County, Illinois, a county of 700,000 people located 40 miles from Chicago, the state government mandated that the county government consolidate the six regional dispatch centers into three centers. One of the significant motives for the consolidation was to reduce the number of transfers between dispatch centers, which would lead to faster response times for emergency services.

The county government paid for the new regional facilities and the individual municipalities whose departments were consolidated into the new dispatch centers shared the ongoing operations costs. The municipalities were able to cut administrative and maintenance expenses to buildings as well as to reduce the wait time for emergency response. Will County studies estimate the cost savings will be between $2.3 and $10.4 million per year.27

3-3. Share Technology Costs and Systems between Agencies

Communication, computer and other technology systems evolve quickly and have become critical to the success of police departments. Ensuring effective communication and data sharing between departments and with the broader criminal justice system is critical.

Currently, there are several areas where local agencies have connected systems. For example, the sheriff, HPD, the constables and most other smaller departments are already operating with radio and other communication equipment that enables direct connection at both the dispatch and officer level. Similarly, both HPD and the sheriff use the same computer-aided dispatch system, Tiburon.

These connected systems help to streamline a variety of tasks, but as arranged now the costs of these systems are not shared. Further, a variety of other systems that are purchased and maintained individually by departments—everything from data storage to IT security—represent areas where agencies could benefit from joint purchases or operations.

A. Create a centralized data repository.

A centralized database of all crime data, records and other information created by the various police departments would be a hugely beneficial undertaking. Individual departments currently create, store and manage their own records. This system creates a number of obstacles for the clear communication of records to the district attorney or other prosecutors, other law enforcement agencies, and the public.

Creating a centralized cloud-based data repository would allow agencies to reduce costs for data infrastructure. Agencies could collectively support a shared system through operating fees or a subscription to the system. Further, there would be significant savings created in the administration of information technology within each agency.

A 2017 report from the Urban Institute laid out a blueprint for an interagency data-sharing platform. The report outlined the significant challenges of data sharing across jurisdictions and agencies including the sharing of staffing, infrastructure, and funding; technological constraints across data platforms; agency culture and politics; shared goals and benefits; management and centralized leadership of the system; and public access. Despite these significant challenges, the report concluded that law enforcement agencies should embrace data sharing in a centralized database because of the vast opportunities to
learn from other agencies, better track crime in the region and leverage the best talent across the region. In the Houston region, a major first step toward this effort would be to identify a trusted manager of the repository itself. One potential model would be to set up the system to be managed by the Harris County District Attorney. This would free all departments up from maintaining a data storage system and better connect the district attorney’s office with the data required for court cases.

Pros:
- Ease communication about existing data for all agencies, officials and the public.
- Reduce costs in administration, operations, and technology infrastructure for individual data repositories.

Cons:
- Raise concerns about security of data and other records.
- Require overcoming politics and hesitancy of most departments to relinquish control of records.
- Require the identification and resourcing of a trusted lead agency or actor to manage the system.

**Case Study:**
While the task of setting up an entire new database may be difficult, it is feasible to leverage existing systems. Forensic Logic’s LEAP Network, which was developed from IBM’s COPLINK system, offers one model for a potential regional central database. The LEAP network allows agencies to store and cross-search records from a variety of agencies that are part of the system. Rather than operating individually, agencies in the region should operate as a collaborative entity to invest in this acquisition. Multiple national and local agencies already are a part of the LEAP Network. Several federal agencies participate in a similar cloud-based system called FedRamp.

**B. Improve procurement/cooperative purchasing on technology and software**
Shared procurement or cooperative purchasing is a common practice in law enforcement, particularly for items such as vehicles and communications equipment. Several national entities exist that help agencies get access to negotiated purchase agreements. Participating in these programs can help local agencies reduce costs and time devoted to procurement.

In many cases, the lead cooperative purchasing entity is the local metropolitan planning organization (MPO). The Houston-Galveston Area Council (HGAC), the Houston area’s MPO operates a nationally recognized cooperative purchasing and procurement system called HGACBuy. The entity works with public agencies at the regional, state, and national level. The HGACBuy team carries out the bidding and contracting negotiations with suppliers on behalf of its members. Once the contracts are set, agencies can simply place purchase orders through the existing agreement.

Typically, procurement programs such as HGACBuy have not ventured into procuring technology or software programs because of the quickly changing nature of the systems themselves and the needs of agencies. However, the programs are open and able to undertake procurement of these products, if regional consensus among agencies can be reached on the scale, scope and type of product needed.

For example, if Harris County law enforcement agencies wanted to create shared technology systems or a central data repository and can agree on its primary elements, the contracts to create and maintain such a system could be secured through HGACBuy.

Pros:
- Create savings for agencies involved by reducing staffing, infrastructure, and maintenance costs for information technology products.
- Improve pricing for technology and software through joint purchasing.
- Support regional/local data and technology sharing efforts.

Cons:
- Require decisions about procurement for technology and software, which is often difficult because of the speed with which the technology and the needs can change.
- Require regional consensus on the parameters of any systems.
- Overhaul existing technology procurement processes and would require adjustments from all participating agencies.
Conclusion

The existing collaborations between Harris County law enforcement agencies prove that the region is committed to providing residents with an effective and cohesive public safety network. Cooperation between agencies, both formal and informal, has created a foundation from which additional relationships and partnerships can be forged.

At the same time, there are clear areas of overlap. Duties such as patrol responsibilities and highway enforcement are split between multiple agencies and in many cases patrol jurisdictions overlap. Simplifying and streamlining patrol duties would not only clarify responsibilities for agencies, but for residents as well. Likewise, realigning patrol duties within the county would free both officers and funding up for additional duties, or could simply reduce costs.

There are also clear wins on sharing the costs of key data and technology services. This, too, requires collaboration and a willingness of agencies to trust one another and other county agencies such as the district attorney. But, the savings and efficiencies that could be created by collectively storing crime data or other records are significant.

Decisions about how to address areas of potential reform are politically contentious, but viewed beyond the structures of particular agencies, there are clear advantages to considering ways to consolidate key services, duties or even entities.
## Appendix A: Overview of Law Enforcement Agencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Jurisdiction</th>
<th>Jurisdiction Size</th>
<th>Population + Jobs</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Budget/Population + Jobs</th>
<th>FTE Total</th>
<th>FTE (sworn officers)</th>
<th>FTE (civilian)</th>
<th>FTE Officers/1,000 population + jobs</th>
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|               |               |                   | 7,280,986 | $1,617,750,088 | $222.19 | 14,988 | 11,675 | 3,176 | 1.60 |
## Appendix B: Constable Budgets by Precinct

### FY2017 HC Constable Pct. 3 Budget: $15,183,378

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### FY2017 HC Constable Pct. 1 Budget: $37,088,316

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<td>Contract Deputies (n)</td>
<td>36/83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contracts (n)</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Warrant Division</td>
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### FY2017 HC Constable Pct. 7 Budget: $12,425,189

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Civil Division</td>
<td>$2,316,514</td>
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<tr>
<td>Patrol Division</td>
<td>$5,976,823</td>
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<td>Contract Deputies (n)</td>
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<td>Contracts (n)</td>
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### FY2017 HC Constable Pct. 8 Budget: $7,978,176

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<td>Civil Division</td>
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<td>Contracts (n)</td>
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<td>Warrant Division</td>
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</table>
## Appendix C: Overview of School Districts with Law Enforcement Agencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Jurisdiction</th>
<th>Jurisdiction Size (square miles)</th>
<th>Population + Jobs</th>
<th>Police and Security Budget</th>
<th>Budget / Population + Jobs</th>
<th>FTE Employees (Total)</th>
<th>FTE Sworn Officers</th>
<th>FTE (civilian) / 1,000 Population + Jobs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aldine ISD PD</td>
<td>Aldine ISD</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>79,426</td>
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<td>68</td>
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<td>Alief ISD PD</td>
<td>Alief ISD</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>52,871</td>
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<td>$ 131.24</td>
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<td>Cypress-Fairbanks ISD PD</td>
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<td>102</td>
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<td>Galena Park ISD PD</td>
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<td>Goose Creek CISD</td>
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<td>Houston ISD PD</td>
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<td>Humble ISD PD</td>
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<td>Spring Branch ISD PD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spring ISD PD</td>
<td>Spring ISD</td>
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</table>

| Total                   | 908,152      | $ 87,394,574                   | $ 96.23           | 892                         | 703                       | 189                   | 0.98  |
### Appendix D: Small City Law Enforcement Budget and Sworn Personnel Strength

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Jurisdiction</th>
<th>Population + Jobs</th>
<th>Police Budget</th>
<th>Budget / Population + Jobs</th>
<th>FTE Employees (Total)</th>
<th>FTE Sworn Officers</th>
<th>FTE (civilian)</th>
<th>Officers / 1,000 Population + Jobs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baytown Police Department</td>
<td>Baytown</td>
<td>99,682</td>
<td>$26,462,914</td>
<td>$265.47</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>163</td>
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<td>Bellaire Police Department</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>0.98</td>
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<td>44,996</td>
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<td>56</td>
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<td>Bunker Hill Village, Pinney Point Village, Hunters Creek Village</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>Agency</td>
<td>Jurisdiction</td>
<td>Population + Jobs</td>
<td>Police Budget</td>
<td>Budget / Population + Jobs</td>
<td>FTE Employees (Total)</td>
<td>FTE Sworn Officers</td>
<td>FTE (civilian)</td>
<td>Officers / 1,000 Population + Jobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<td><strong>1,209,092</strong></td>
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<td><strong>1,540</strong></td>
<td><strong>611</strong></td>
<td><strong>1.27</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
- FTE Sworn Personnel numbers are from the 2016 Uniform Crime Report: Police Employee (LEOKA) Data
- Morgan's Point Police Department FTE Sworn Personnel is an estimate based on budget and website information.
- Population + Jobs are an estimate of 2018 household population and job count for municipalities from H-GAC TAZ population and employment estimates
- * indicates the population + jobs estimate not available. The number is the population reported to 2015 UCR
- ** indicates the population + jobs estimate of the 2015 UCR population is not available. The number is the 2016 population estimate from the U.S. Census Bureau.
- Baytown PD budget from City of Baytown FY2018 Proposed Budget. http://38.106.5.212/home/showdocument?id=7089
- Dear Park PD budget from City of Dear Park FY2018 Adopted Budget. http://www.deeparktx.org/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/item/503
- La Porte PD budget from City of La Porte FY2018 Adopted Budget. http://laportatx.gov/ArchiverCenter/ViewFile/item/2342
- Lakeview PD budget is split on a 50/50 basis between the municipalities it serves. The budget is calculated from the City of Lakeview Village FY2018 Adopted Budget. https://www.lakeviewvillage.us/vertical/sites/%7B27010806-AF50-42F8-96CA-64C598DBFC25%7D/uploads/20171006105115825.pdf
- South Houston PD budget is unavailable.
- Spring Valley PD budget from the City of Spring Valley FY2018 Adopted Budget. https://springsvalleytx.com/DocumentCenter/View/702/ADOPTED-BUDGET-FY2018
- Tomball PD budget from the City of Tomball FY2018 Adopted Budget. http://www.ci.tomball.tx.us/ArchiverCenter/ViewFile/item/2139
- Webster PD budget from the City of Webster FY2018 Budget for Police divisions within Public Safety Department. http://www1.cityofwebster.com/Finance/FY_2017-18_Annual_Budget.pdf
- West University Place PD budget from the City of West University Place FY2017 Budget. http://westutx.gov/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/item/244
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