

# TEMPE REPUBLIC

## New ideas help us fight crime amid budget cuts

Tempe's official crime numbers for 2010 will soon be released. Though the numbers are still being finalized, overall crime in our city continues to decline.

This past year marked the most difficult period in our department's history. Significant and unavoidable budget cuts resulted in layoffs for some, increased workload for others, and a

**MY TURN**

commitment from everyone to do whatever was necessary to protect those to which we took an oath.

This commitment has allowed us to change the way we do business. For once, police history, tradition and culture have taken a backseat to technology, innovation and accountability.

I have placed an emphasis on developing law-enforcement and community partnerships, procuring technology, hiring, retaining and promoting the best and brightest employees, and empowering the department's police leaders by encouraging them to develop new and innovative strategies to fight crime.

With the unwavering support of our city's elected officials, residents and business owners, our efforts are providing a return on your investment. We have implemented many effective crime-fighting strategies including:

» The Crime Suppression Team, a senior police management-led team that meets regularly to review emerging crime trends and allocate departmental resources to best address criminal activity in the city.

» The creation of the highly successful Criminal Apprehension Surveillance Team, which was designed to locate and capture dangerous suspects and known felons quickly, safely and efficiently. Since its inception, CAST has taken more than 267 dangerous criminals — including several homicide suspects — off the streets. By locking up the worst of the worst, CAST prevents criminals from re-



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offending and reduces detectives' caseload and calls for service.

» The deployment of two Patrol ACTION Teams, which target identified crime trends in Tempe neighborhoods and use a variety of uniformed and non-uniformed enforcement methods to eradicate those trends.

» The creation of the Crime and Intel Center, which increases the organization's tactical crime analysis and intelligence capabilities and allows the organization to focus on analyzing and predicting crime, and taking criminals off the street before they offend again.

» Relocated and centralized all investigative resources around the Crime and Intel Center so that information/intelligence can be collected, analyzed and disseminated as quickly as possible to officers and investigators in the field.

» The "mission of the week" concept, whereby patrol lieutenants direct internal and external resources in a focused manner to combat and prevent crime as quickly as possible.

» Cooperative partnerships with other law-enforcement agencies and participation in joint federal and state task forces, which maximize the sharing of resources and improves criminal-intelligence information sharing.

Even with significant budget cuts, Tempe Police employees are working hard to make sure our community remains both safe and vibrant. Though economic challenges will undoubtedly persist for some time — and at times, dealing with them can become distracting — the Tempe Police Department remains focused on our primary mission: to suppress crime and promote the safety of our community.

*Tom Ryff is Tempe's police chief.*