

March 28, 2008 – Email message from TPD Asst. Chief Sharon Allen

March 31, 2008 – Response (in Red) from Donald Ijams, Coordinator, Neighborhood Support Network

Hello Folks,

As a follow up from our February 27, 2008 meeting, the below listed information provides you with an update on our efforts to stream line your access to crime data through the Department's Web Page. Mr. Ijams made a follow up email request for the status and I thought it would be proper to include those of you that had attended the meeting on the response. I have copied those who I had an email address for. I have worked with Mr. Armstrong to compile this information and as you will see some things are still under review and development. For your consideration:

Concern: When a Crime Stat was requested no results would be shown and the opening Web page would be displayed.

Problem: The Web software was running out of memory.

Solution: Additional memory was purchased and installed. In addition the CrimeStat results were modified to display the data in a more manageable way such as one page at a time. These changes have resulted in reliable display results with better response time.

Response: This is good news – we're glad TPD website works better.

Concern: Several individuals had concerns that there were duplicate data and new data not being displayed.

Problem: The CrimeStat database had not been updated since the computer hack back in November 2007. In addition there was one or more set of duplicate data in the data base. The duplicates were the result of an incorrect database update process and the duplicate records were making response time slower than desired.

Solution: The database update process has been re-engineered. The daily updates keep the database current without the potential of creating duplicates.

Response: This is good news – we're glad TPD website works better.

Concern: One of the citizens present at the meeting was concerned that the Neighborhood Search and a corresponding Hundred Block Search did not compare properly.

Problem: The queries for the Hundred Block Search were taking the North/South directions into account properly but not taking the East/West directions into account.

Solution: The query that selects the Hundred Block has been corrected.

Response: This is good news – we're glad TPD website works better.

Concern: There are concerns that a crime that happened across the street from their neighborhood shows up in their neighborhood stats.

Problem: It is mostly caused by a hundred block boundary being wrong for the particular neighborhood or the crime across the street is still in the same hundred blocks.

Solution: TPD does not have any one document or source of information to verify that the hundred blocks specified for a neighborhood are correct. The mapping of neighborhood boundaries is created by the Department of Neighborhood Resources (DNR). If the Neighborhood Resources Data include both sides of the street in their mapping data then it extracts data from both sides of the streets.

Response: We believe that the problem is broader than stated. Depending on 100 blocks to define neighborhoods is not the best method. One hundred blocks are not fine-grained enough to use as a method for defining neighborhoods. Some neighborhoods include properties on both sides of some boundary streets while other boundaries only include properties on one side of the street. One hundred blocks cannot do a sufficient job in defining neighborhoods.

Better Solution: Easy geoprocessing of police incident data after geocoding is available. Whether the DNR-maintained neighborhood layer is used, or another, better file is used, incident records could be assigned to the correct neighborhood with much less error than the current 100 block dependent process provides. TPD currently owns the software to do this data preparation.

Requests from Mr. Ijams -

During the February meeting, Mr. Ijams presented a list of enhancements that he felt the Tucson community should have access to. The following list describes his request and current status or plan:

Data Download - Mr. Ijams requested a rolling 45 days of current data that could be downloaded. Since the site hack last November, we have tightened that ability to upload or download any data to/from the Web site. *Mr. Ijams' request was actually for a data transfer of very recent data that did not involve TPD's website.*

This issue also relates to our indexing ability through the records section.
Mr. Ijams' request was for the most current data available to TPD, regardless of Records' indexing.

To insure the most current information is available for review this process may take anywhere between 2-4 weeks after the end of the month. *The most current information is available within TPD within a day or two of its transfer from the Computer Assisted Dispatch system (CAD) to the Records Management System (RMS).*

A time-line for design and prototyping have not been scheduled but is in discussion.
TPD has apparently determined that a data access method requiring complicated, time-consuming development is needed. We see this as an unnecessary delay. As a start, several fairly simple methods are available to make this data transfer safe for TPD and easy for end users.

Additional Detailed Data - Mr. Ijams presented a new data set that specified several additional data fields. This new data was to include X, Y GIS coordinates for the incident. The source of the data to calculate this X,Y coordinates starts with the actual address of the incident. *Coordinates as part of available public data are not new. TPD has been making public, geocoded (X and Y coordinates) data files available, on request, to the public for at least the last ten years. Data with coordinates will make it possible, among other things, for neighbors to do geoprocessing to accomplish better neighborhood labeling if TPD chooses not to do so.*

Therefore one could determine the original address given the new data.

The actual geocoding method uses the endpoints of street segments to present an approximate distance up and down the street for point coordinates. People can guess at the real address but can never be sure. Also, incidents frequently occur in or near streets and are given street addresses that have no relationship to the building(s) at those addresses.

The engineering and design for presenting this new data is on hold waiting a decision on the above referenced problem.

Provide Final 2007 Incident File -

This information was provided to Mr. Ijams. *Thank you.*

Please review this information with your neighborhood association members and let me know of your additional concerns. As soon as I have discussed the issue of the X,Y GIS concern with my legal department I will forward to you that decision. As it stands now we do not release victim specific information regarding their address.

Final Response: Neighborhood leaders are happy that TPD is making its website better. They remain unhappy with the use of 100 blocks as the method for defining neighborhoods. Leaders are also unhappy with a number of points related to the fresh data access request:

- 1. Leaders do not want to have to access the website on a daily basis to obtain yesterday's police incident data. They hope for an automated transfer of data that can be further processed by neighborhoods and their representatives as they see fit.*
- 2. Leaders want to map crime and police incident data. They need X and Y coordinates for this purpose. Since TPD already produces an incident file that has X and Y coordinates, along with masked addresses, leaders would like not to duplicate this process.*
- 3. Masked addresses provide sufficient protection for victims and are a reasonable measure given neighborhood leaders' desire to adequately stay on top of crime in their areas and to communicate effectively with their residents.*

Neighborhood leaders wish that TPD would try harder to work with neighborhoods on this issue. We are asking for public data to be made available in a timely, easy to work with manner. Please do not make us jump through hoops, especially since we are working to become the most effective partners in crime reduction that we can be.