

Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police  
MICHIGAN LAW ENFORCEMENT ACCREDITATION PROGRAM



# Onsite Final Report

**The City of Battle Creek Police Department  
May 23 & 24, 2022**

**Team Leader: Matt Ivory**

**Team Member: Matt Kelleher**

**Team Member: Matt Silverthorn**

**A. Agency Name, CEO and AM:**

The City of Battle Creek Police Department  
34 North Division  
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(269) 966-3375

Jim Blocker  
Chief of Police

Brad Wise  
Accreditation Manager

**B. Dates of the On-Site Assessment:**

Monday, May 23, 2022 – Tuesday, May 24, 2022

**C. Assessment Team:**

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## **D. Community and Agency Profile:**

### **1. Community Profile**

Battle Creek, Michigan is a city located in southwest Michigan. The city is located where the Battle Creek and Kalamazoo Rivers converge. Battle Creek was named for an encounter that occurred in 1824 between two Potawatomi Indians and government land surveyors. The following year settlers returned and the area was officially settled in 1831. The settlement of Battle Creek grew and incorporated into a city in 1859.

The city gained early fame during the late 1800s and early 1900s as the home of the Battle Creek Sanitarium. Founded by Dr. John Harvey Kellogg, it was a destination for those with physical ailments.

Kellogg's brother, W.K. Kellogg, worked for him at the sanitarium. It was here that he inadvertently discovered what we know today as "Corn Flakes." Due to the demand, W.K. built a factory in Battle Creek and began to mass-produce Corn Flakes. This led other individuals, including C.W. Post, to begin to produce cereal, earning Battle Creek the nickname "the Cereal City." Both Kellogg's and Post Cereals still maintain plants in Battle Creek. Their legacy continues with areas of the city and streets named after the Post and Kellogg families. Battle Creek is home to the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, which funds projects worldwide with its \$7.3 billion dollar endowment.

Battle Creek was a major stop on the Underground Railroad used by fugitive slaves to escape to freedom in Michigan and Canada. It was the chosen home of noted abolitionist Sojourner Truth after her escape from slavery.

Currently, the City annually hosts "The World's Longest Breakfast Table" and the World Hot Air Balloon Championships.

Battle Creek has four public school districts within its boundaries, Battle Creek Public Schools, Harper Creek Public Schools, Lakeview Public Schools, and Pennfield Public Schools. Kellogg Community College is also located in the City of Battle Creek.

The top employers in Battle Creek are Denso Manufacturing, Hart-Dole-Inouye Federal Center, Bronson Battle Creek Hospital, Kellogg Company, and Kraft Food Post Division.

According to the United States Census Bureau, the City of Battle Creek has a total area of 43.73 square miles of which 42.61 square miles is land and 1.12 square miles is water, making Battle Creek the third largest city in Michigan by area, and one of only three incorporated municipalities in the state over 40 sq. miles in size. Approximately 60% of the city's land is developed. Of the undeveloped land, 38% is zoned agricultural, 26% is zoned general industrial, 17.5% is zoned residential, 16% is the Fort Custer Army National Guard Base/Industrial Park, and 2.5% is zoned commercial.

As of the census of 2010, there were 52,347 people, 21,118 households, and 12,898 families residing in the city. The population density was 1,228.5 inhabitants per square mile. There were 24,277 housing units at an average density of 569.7 per square mile.

The racial makeup of the city was 71.7% White, 18.2% African American, 0.7% Native American, 2.4% Asian, 2.7% from other races, and 4.3% from two or more races. Hispanic or Latino people of any race were 6.7% of the population.

There were 21,118 households of which 33.6% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 37.1% were married couples living together, 18.5% had a female householder with no husband present, 5.5% had a male householder with no wife present, and 38.9% were non-families. 32.6% of all households were made up of individuals and 12.1% had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 2.41 and the average family size was 3.04.

The median age in the city was 36.3 years. 26.1% of residents were under the age of 18; 9% were between the ages of 18 and 24; 25.9% were from 25 to 44; 25.5% were from 45 to 64; and 13.4% were 65 years of age or older. The gender makeup of the city was 47.9% male and 52.1% female.

As of 2017, the median household income was \$48,069 and median home price \$113,000.

The City of Battle Creek operates as a commission/manager form of government with an appointed City Manager and elected City Commissioners. The City manager oversees the day-to-day operations of the city, manages staff operations, recommends the annual budget and makes policy recommendations to the commission.

## **2. Agency Profile**

In 1900, the City Council authorized the formation of the Battle Creek Police Department. The department consisted of nine officers and Chief William Farrington. Four years later the department published its first "Manual and Rules and Regulations of the Police Department of the City of Battle Creek."

The Battle Creek Police Department was housed at 34 North Division from 1916 until 1971. A new station was built at 20 North Division to replace the outdated and crowded facility. During this time, there was great divisiveness between the officers and the administration and city officials. An outbreak of "blue flu" hit and officers became unavailable. A disciplinary issue further caused dissention and 45 officers failed to report to work. An ultimatum was given for the officers to return or be terminated. The officers refused to return to duty and were terminated.

Change came to the department again in 1982. A merger occurred between the City of Battle Creek and Battle Creek Township. This merger also meant the merger of the two police departments.

In 1995 Bedford Township, an adjoining jurisdiction, disbanded their police department and contracted with the City of Battle Creek to provide police services to the township. This contract added an addition 36 sq. miles to the patrol area.

The station at 20 North Division served the department well, but by 2017, it could not adequately house the department and meet its needs. A new station was approved and constructed at a cost of \$15.5 million. It was constructed at 34 North Division, the site of the original Battle Creek Police Department.

The department currently staffs 103 sworn officers, with an authorized strength of 118 sworn officers, and 18 civilian employees with an operating budget of \$20 million for the fiscal year 2021/22 and an increase in fiscal year 2022/23 to \$23 million. The Calhoun County Consolidated Dispatch Authority provides dispatching for the police agencies in Calhoun County. Officers responded to 54,475 calls for service in 2021.

**The department is comprised of the following divisions:**

Patrol Division includes:

Patrol	Bicycle Patrol
Downtown Patrol Assignment	Training Unit
Bronson Battle Creek Hospital Assignment	Emergency Response Team
Gang Suppression Unit	Warrant Officer
Hotel and Highway Interdiction	Animal Control
COPS	Crisis Intervention Officer
School Liaison Officers	Police Training Officer
Vehicle Inspections Officer	Telephone Response Unit
Community Services	Emergency Services
K-9 Unit	

Investigations Bureau that includes:

Detective  
Fusion Center  
Special Investigation Unit  
Fugitive Team  
Bomb Unit  
Forensic Laboratory  
Evidence Unit  
Quartermaster  
Crime Technicians  
Emergency Services

An emphasis has been put on training and the department has experienced a vast amount of training over the past three years, although COVID forced somewhat of a slowdown. The department now conducts its own training from qualified in-house instructors in areas such as Emergency Vehicle Operations, Use of Force, Active Shooter, SWAT Training, Implicit Bias, Fair and Impartial Policing, Crisis Intervention Training and Trauma Informed Response to Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence. The

department has begun to train surrounding agencies in Emergency Vehicle Operations, Active Shooter, and Use of Force. The Emergency Response Team is now responsible for training all SWAT/ERT snipers within the 5th District.

The department includes a seven-member bomb unit, four canines, and a five officer Gang Suppression Unit that work closely with the Special Investigations Unit and Fusion Center.

The department added a Fusion Center in 2016. The Fusion Center is the information clearinghouse for the Battle Creek Police Department. They monitor daily crime trends, link the appropriate stakeholder to community concerns, respond to actionable intelligence, and work to open communication lines between local law enforcement and community partners.

The Fusion Center is comprised of members of the Battle Creek Police Department, Juvenile Probation, Domestic Violence Liaison with the Calhoun County Prosecutor's Office, CPS, Summit Point, MDOC Parole, Federal Probation, and Homeland Security. They also work hand in hand with our Community Services office. They understand that their job is to build relationships and to work diligently to make the community safe.

The department added a Victim Advocate and a Domestic Violence Liaison to the staff during this Accreditation Period. The Victim Advocate works with victims/victim's families of Part One crimes. Domestic Violence Liaison works in conjunction with the courts in attending to the needs of the victims of domestic violence.

The department has several programs that they maintained during the past three years which include:

Lethality Assessment Program

Handle with Care (informing school when child has been exposed to police at an incident)

Chaplin Program

Outreach to the Burmese Community

Outreach to the Congolese Community

Crisis Intervention

Mental Health First Aid

Cops and Clergy

Faith in Blue

MACP Accreditation Program

Career Development Guidance

Shop with a Cop

Coffee with a Cop

Citizen's Police Academy

### **3. CEO Biography**

Jim Blocker is the 18th Chief of Police for the Battle Creek Police Department. Having served within the Battle Creek Police Department for 25 years in various capacities:

- Patrol Officer
- Community Police Officer
- SWAT team
- Detective
- Executive Officer

Boards and Committees:

- Vice Chair on the Summit Point Board
- Battle Creek Y Family Center Executive Board Chair
- Grace Health Board
- Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police Accreditation Commission
- West Michigan Chiefs of Police Association

Military History:

- Lt/Col in the US Army, serving in the Michigan Army National Guard
- Currently assigned as the battalion Commander for the 210 MP Battalion.
- Multiple tours of duty serving in: South America, Egypt, Latvia and two combat tours in Iraq and Afghanistan.
- Earned two Bronze stars, two Army Commendation Medals, three Army Achievement Medals, the NATO ribbon and the Combat Action Badge.

Education:

- Master's Degree in Public Administration from Western Michigan University
- Bachelor's Degree from Cornerstone College
- Graduate of the Senior Management Institute for Police-Boston University and the Police Executive Research Forum
- FBI National Academy
- Executive Fellow for the Police Foundation, Washington, D.C.
- Several US Army command courses, including the Red Team Leaders Course.

#### **4. Accreditation Manager Biography**

Inspector Brad Wise has served with the Battle Creek Police Department for over 25 years in various capacities. He has held several positions within the Battle Creek Police Department including 13 years as a Detective assigned to investigating major crimes including homicide and sexual assault. He currently holds the rank of Inspector supervising the Office of Professional Standards, Recruitment and Hiring, and the Accreditation Program. Inspector Wise oversaw the Battle Creek Police Department's initial Accreditation process in 2018. Inspector Wise serves on the advisory board for Sexual Assault Services of Calhoun County, Michigan Law Enforcement Accreditation Commission Assessor, and as trainer for Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement

Standards and Prosecuting Attorneys Association of Michigan, specializing in training sexual assault and domestic violence investigations with emphasis placed on a trauma informed response. Inspector Wise is the former Coordinator of the Calhoun County Major Crimes Task Force, an advisory committee member for the Audit of Untested Sexual Assault Evidence Kits as part of the Michigan Sexual Assault Evidence Kit Tracking and Reporting Commission, and assisted in developing the Domestic Violence training curriculum for the Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards. He has served on the Michigan Domestic and Sexual Violence Prevention and Treatment Board's Governor's Secure Cities Jurisdictions of Excellence Project Model Policy Work Group, including sexual assault investigation training to the recipient cities with an emphasis on the neurobiology of trauma and providing a victim centered offender focus investigation. Inspector Wise assisted in developing the Domestic Violence training curriculum for the Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards and instructs at Kalamazoo Valley Community College and Kellogg Community College police academies. Inspector Wise attended Sienna Heights University earning a Bachelor of Science Degree in Public Administration.

Inspector Wise has been married to his wife, Angie, for 37 years and they have two children and five grandchildren

## **5. Future Issues**

The Battle Creek Police Department's staff is highly educated and extremely dedicated to the community. The CEO is most proud of the fact that the staff will not settle for the status quo. Everyone in the agency is always improving themselves and the organization. Employee wellness is a priority. The agency provides a designated space for staff to exercise for physical fitness. Chief Blocker considers himself a life-long learner, and the agency has taken on this same philosophy. The agency intends to continue its community-orientated mindset.

Chief Blocker stated the most challenging issue is hiring. Between January 1, 2019 and May 1, 2022 the agency has hired 35 new officers. This has put an ongoing strain on hiring and the training unit. The agency has a close relationship with Kellogg Community College as one of their retirees runs the police academy. The agency is also looking for candidates who possess good interpersonal communication skills and are service oriented.

The CEO has a comprehensive succession plan. Newly promoted supervisory staff have attended leadership development seminars and training sessions. All command staff are highly educated and well prepared for advancement. The CEO is dedicated to maintaining best practices and to keeping up with the rapidly changing issues facing policing in America.



## **E. Public Information Activities:**

Public notice and input are cornerstones of democracy and MLEAC accreditation. This section reports on the community's opportunity to comment on their law enforcement agency and to bring matters to the attention of the commission that otherwise may be overlooked.

### **1. Telephone Contacts**

The public telephone line was active on Tuesday, May 24, 2022, from 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. The telephone line was tested, found to be functional, and four calls were received:

#### **Steven Hinkley – Calhoun County Sheriff**

Steven Hinkley is the Sheriff of Calhoun County. Sheriff Hinkley stated that his office has an excellent relationship with the Battle Creek Police Department. Sheriff Hinkley stated that they have excellent cooperation and do what they can to not only work together, but to also avoid having duplicate services such as major crimes task force, which they do jointly. When asked if there was anything he would suggest changing about the department, he jestfully stated that they should not let people retire. We thanked Sheriff Hinkley for his time and discontinued the call.

#### **Kyra Wallace - Citizen and involved with Southwest Michigan Urban League**

Kyra Wallace serves in some respect on the Southwest Michigan Urban League. Ms. Wallace stated that as an organization, they have been forging a relationship with Battle Creek Police with respect to the relationship between the department and the African-American Community. Ms. Wallace states there is work to be done with the African American community and law enforcement but they have taken many steps. She stated that they have been facilitating meetings to repair relationships, have an emergent leader's program where youth interact with police, and try to teach that police are human being as well. Wallace stated that the Battle Creek Police Department stayed connected with the city during the George Floyd protest and an audit is being conducted and ways to see how practices are affecting the African community. Ms. Wallace believes the training received could be more targeted as it relates to equity within the community. When asked about Battle Creek's desire for re-accreditation, Ms. Wallace states she supports their efforts.

#### **Danielle Kostrab-Boyd – Sexual Assault Services**

Danielle Kostrab-Boyd is an advocate with the area's local sexual assault service provider. Kostrab-Boyd stated that they have a positive, supportive, and collaborative relationship with the Battle Creek Police Department over many years. They value the relationship and how well they work together with the advocacy program. Kostrab-Boyd had nothing negative and BC PD is very open if they have any concerns. She stated

they share a lot of mutual respect for each other and they have strong, open communication. Ms. Kostrab-Boyd supports re-accreditation.

Tim Kool – Owner Heritage Chevrolet 269-565-9507

Tim Kool is a business owner for 40 years in the City. Mr. Kool reported having interaction with Battle Creek Police involving security and safety issues and regular patrol. Mr. Kool sits on Dykman road business improvement and works closely with Battle Creek police. Mr. Kool is involved with non- profits that work with Battle Creek police. Mr. Kool advised Battle Creek police were recently given an award for great participation. Mr. Kool had nothing negative to say about the Battle Creek Police. Mr. Kool stated the Battle Creek Police have been outstanding. Mr. Kool supports re-accreditation.

## **2. Correspondence**

The assessors received no email correspondence regarding the accreditation process.

## **3. Media Interest**

There were no inquiries from the media to assessors regarding the on-site.

## **4. Community Outreach Contacts**

There were no community outreach contacts scheduled for the assessors during the on-site.

## **5. Agency Ride-along**

On Monday afternoon, Assessor Matt Kelleher rode with Officer Angela Matthews. Officer Matthews is assigned to Zone G. Officer Matthews patrolled her assigned area and responded on calls during the ride along.

Officer Matthews is a newer member of the agency. Officer Matthews previously worked for the City of Lansing as both an officer and sergeant. Officer Matthews holds a master's degree in Social Work and is CIT trained. Officer Matthews talked about her background in social work and her CIT training and how it assists her in responding to the needs of the community. Officer Matthews talked about how officers are assigned to geographical locations and how this allows them to build relationships with the people within these areas. Officer Matthews spoke highly of the agency her co-workers and command staff. Officer Matthews came across a hit and run accident while responding to another call. Those involved in the accident were upset and Officer Matthews did a good job calming everyone down and getting them back on their way.

Officer Matthews responded to a residence to answer questions regarding a person protection order. Officer Matthews took the time to listen to the citizen and answer his questions. Officer Matthews provided detailed advice to the citizen on how he can best

resolve his problem. The citizen thanked Officer Matthews for talking with him and for the advice.

Officer Matthews was dispatched on a juvenile trouble call. Officer Matthews arrived and met with a foster mother and a 14 year old boy. The 14 year old boy was having mental health crisis. Officer Matthews was compassionate and talked with the boy about issues he is having. Officer Matthews spoke with the boy's mother who agreed to meet at Summit Pointe. Summit Pointe is a facility in Battle Creek which Officer Matthews spoke highly of in regards to the mental health services offered. Officer Matthews transported the boy to Summit Pointe and remained with him until family arrived and staff had been told of the needs of the boy.

## **6. Community Involvement**

The Battle Creek Police Department is commitment to Community Oriented Policing and is dedicated to enhancing community connections between neighbors, and the officers that serve them. Through partnerships with businesses, organizations, and citizen groups the Battle Creek Police Department strive to provide programs for residents and especially children to enhance their quality of life in the Battle Creek Community.

A Neighborhood Planning Council has been established in each neighborhood in the City of Battle Creek. An officer who patrols the Planning Council's district is assigned to that Neighborhood Planning Council. Their role is to attend the monthly meetings, provide crime statistics, present programs such as crime prevention, and help organize and participate in neighborhood events.

Some of the programs currently supported by the Battle Creek Police Department are: Citizens Police Academy, Police Explorer Program, Be Safe Battle Creek – Byrne Grant Initiative, Police Athletic League (partner: New Level Sports), and Midnight Youth-Basketball Program (partners: YMCA, Battle Creek Community Foundation, New Age Cool People), Cops and Clergy, and National Night Out/Faith in Blue.

The Battle Creek Police Department also organizes community events such as Halloween Trunk or Treat, National Night Out, Stuff the Truck-Toy Drive, and many more.

The agency recently introduced a Ring Doorbell initiative where citizens can forward recorded videos to the agency to assist with investigations. The agency also partners with organizations such as Sisters, which consists of family members of murdered victims.

The agency also has a police chaplain program. The program promotes positive relationships between law enforcement officers and the community. It also gives officers a viable resource in times of crisis.

## **F. Essential Services:**

### **Chapter 1 – The Administrative Function:**

#### **Direction of Personnel**

The Chief of Police has the sole authority to issue, modify, and approve agency written directives. However, the Chief's designee may issue or make modifications to policy during the Chief's absence. The agency has a written directive system. The overall written directive system was clear and understandable. The directives were constructed in a logical manner with employee duties and responsibilities clearly defined, including constraints on employee actions and expectations.

#### **Fiscal Control**

The agency does not maintain petty cash. Instead, the agency utilizes a Procurement Card for purchases. A detailed itemized receipt is forwarded to the City's Finance Department, who remunerates the bill. A spending limit is set at \$5000 on the Procurement Card. Only the City Council has the authority to raise this limit. Records Department has a method that reflects the initial balance, cash received, cash disbursed and balance regarding daily activity. Cash accounts are tracked using the Quicken Money Program and were reviewed quarterly.

#### **Internal Affairs**

The Office of Professional Standards Inspector is responsible for the internal investigation function of the agency. The agency will accept and investigate all complaints, even those made anonymously. Based on the seriousness of the complaint, the Inspector may choose to assign the complaint to the employee's supervisor. Complaints that involve potential suspension or termination are investigated by the Inspector. Upon completion of the investigation, the complainants are forwarded to the Office of Professional Standards where they are reviewed, recommendations made, and forwarded directly to the Chief of Police.

During the 2019 - 2021 assessment period, 62 internal investigations were conducted; 33 Department Inquiries and 29 Citizen Complaints. Of the 29 Citizen complaints, nine were sustained, twelve were unfounded, five were exonerated, two were not sustained and 1 resulted in a policy failure. Of the 33 Department Inquiries, 21 were sustained, nine were exonerated, two were unfounded, and one was not sustained. The agency identifies a need to change policy in one incident and identified training needs in vehicle operations, to include an emphasis on backing.

The agency uses training and counseling in lieu of discipline when appropriate. The annual analysis recommended that supervision continue to monitor and take corrective action on any identified early warning triggers and to continue emphasizing ethical decision-making during mandatory training sessions.

### Disciplinary Procedures

The agency's written directive system details the rules, regulations and expectations for employee conduct. Supervisors have discretion to place employees on administrative leave when it is in the best interest of the individual or department. The agency is well-disciplined and has procedures to apply training and counseling in lieu of punitive employee discipline. The agency has an appropriate appeal and grievance process in place with established timelines. During the three-year assessment period there were four discipline or corrective action related grievances and two labor agreement grievances. The two grievances filed regarding alleged violations of the labor agreement were resolved. Three of the four discipline or corrective action related grievances were denied with no appeal. The fourth is awaiting arbitration. Only the Chief of Police can authorize dissemination of agency disciplinary actions resulted in unpaid suspension from duty or termination of employment.

### Organization

All sworn personnel take, sign and subsequently abide by an oath of office to enforce the law and uphold the Constitution of the United States, the Constitution of the State of Michigan and the rules and regulations of the Battle Creek Police Department. All agency personnel acknowledge a code of ethics and receive ethics training.

Bias-influenced policing is strictly prohibited by the agency. There is a clear definition for bias-influenced policing, including but not limited to race, mistreatment of individuals based on ethnic background, national origin, gender, sexual orientation/identity, religion, economic status, age, cultural group, or any other identifiable characteristics. The agency has a unique system of spot checking for bias-influenced policing. The Office of Professional Standards does an annual body camera video review of several incidents (80 incidents reviewed in 2021) looking specifically for bias. Although it is impossible to prove no incidents occurred, this is a positive quality control technique.

The agency also prohibits unlawful workplace discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment. The written directive outlines a proper reporting mechanism in the chain of command, including an alternate reporting process for any conflict of interest. The directive requires employees to report any type of harassment and requires investigations to be conducted in accordance with state law. Every employee completes a written harassment policy acknowledgement every six months, which reaffirms understanding of expectations outlined within the policy. There was one reported incident of workplace harassment during the assessment period.

The police personnel have structured unity of command. In the City of Battle Creek Police Department, the Chief of Police is supported by a Deputy Chief. The City of Battle Creek Police Department currently has 103 sworn personnel with an authorized sworn staff of 116 along with 18 support personnel. There are three patrol lieutenants in Operations who supervise eight patrol sergeants and 46 patrol officers, nine of which are corporals. There are also five cadets and 14 explorers. Investigations Division include a Deputy Chief, detective lieutenant, detective sergeant, and 11 detectives. There is also a

sergeant in charge of the fusion center. The Office of Professional Standards has an inspector and training sergeant. Emergency Services is run by an inspector. There is a sergeant in charge of the Gang Suppression Unit and Special Investigations Unit. Community Services has a sergeant who supervises the programs. The agency operates under the Calhoun County Consolidated Dispatch Authority (CCCD) for its Public Service Answering Point (PSAP). The CCCD receives all 911 calls for service and dispatch calls for service for public safety in Calhoun County, including the City of Battle Creek, Michigan. The agency also has access to supervisory personnel on a 24-hour basis; there is always a supervisor on-duty. In the absence of the Chief of Police, a Deputy Chief is designated as being in charge.

#### Agency Equipment and Property

Agency personnel are responsible for all equipment issued to them or physically under their control. It is the responsibility of the employee to maintain all law enforcement-related equipment in an operational state and report any malfunctions, damage, or loss of equipment immediately to their supervisor. The wearing of body armor is mandatory for all sworn personnel, and there are additional requirements to wear body armor while engaged in pre-planned and high-risk operations. All sworn personnel are responsible for the maintenance of agency-issued equipment.

#### Public Information

The Chief of Police or designee directs the preparation of all media releases. Once approved for distribution, media releases for large incidents or press conferences are forwarded to the City of Battle Creek Communications Manager for dissemination to all media outlets. For everyday incidents, the Shift Lieutenant or Sergeant will utilize Next Door and send that information to the media outlets. Although it is the primary responsibility of the City of Battle Creek Communications Director to interact with the media, other members of the Battle Creek Police Department are encouraged to assist members of the media. By policy, the Battle Creek Police Department cooperates fully and impartially with authorized media personnel by assisting their efforts to gather factual public information pertaining to activities of the agency, as long as providing such information does not unduly interfere with agency operation.

#### Agency Records and Computers

The agency has a detailed written directive system describing field reporting, follow-up investigations, and the approval of reports by supervision. The department controls access to agency records electronically with records management passwords. Any hard copies of reports are stored in a room where only records staff have access. Juvenile records are kept separate, and there are extra security measures for non-public records. All freedom of information requests are handled by the City Clerk's office and the agency abides by the state retention and disposal requirements in accordance with Michigan Statute and Records Management.

The agency has procedures to protect its central records. The data is stored and backed up electronically and is password-protected. Annual security audits and password audits were performed during the assessment period. There were no breaches in security during the assessment period.

### Agency Training

The agency training records are current and are being maintained in accordance with applicable retention schedules. Training course content is outlined, and lesson plans are utilized. In-house instructors are properly trained and experienced. New sworn personnel are required to complete an extensive training program. Officers in field training rotate shifts and assigned field training officers in an attempt to expose newly hired officers to all shifts. Field training officers are properly selected and trained through a documented process. The Chief of Police makes the final determination of selection of field training officers. The field training program is properly supervised by a sergeant. Newly promoted personnel receive supervisory and leadership training consistent with new responsibilities and tasks. The agency has a remedial training policy. During the assessment period remedial training was conducted for both performance improvement needs identified by trainers and recommendations based on Internal Investigations. No other training needs were identified during the assessment period.

Specific required annual training topics were properly identified in the written directive. The agency conducts mandatory training annually with each patrol team to accomplish the required training, review of material, and assessments. Annual training included firearms, emergency vehicle operation, hazmat, use of force, blood borne pathogens, Taser, incident command, and ethics. Agency-authorized in-service training focuses on any changes in case law affecting law enforcement, interview and interrogation techniques, crime prevention, emergency medical services, collection and preservation of evidence, and report writing. Members of the agency assigned to tactical operations (Emergency Response Team (ERT), Bomb Unit, and K-9) train at a minimum of 16 hours a month to ensure operational readiness.

### Authorization and Use of Agency Weapons and Ammunition

The CEO is the authorizing authority for weapons and ammunition, including specialized weapons. The agency uses certified/qualified staff for armorer inspections, repair and replacement. Records of weapons are properly maintained with written guidelines for storage. The written directive regarding ammunition did not indicate that the agency's CEO authorized all ammunition used in law enforcement activities.

## **Chapter 2 – The Personnel Function:**

### Personnel Benefits and Responsibilities

The agency has a written directive outlining an employee assistance program, line-of-duty injury and death circumstance policy, and an employee collision and review process.

During the assessment period member were involved in 26 fleet accidents (both private property and on-roadway) while on duty. Each were investigated, reviewed, and appropriate action taken. The agency uses a third party provider for the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). All city employees have access to the service and it is kept confidential how many police department employees utilized the service during the assessment period. Also during the assessment period, there was one serious line of duty injury involving an officer being shot by a suspect and no line of duty death incidents. The agency has a comprehensive exposure control and reporting policy. The agency allows personnel to utilize the exercise room during break times. Off duty employment is allowed with approval from the CEO. Extra employment is prohibited by policy.

### Performance Evaluations

The performance evaluation system has a well-defined purpose statement with established and defined criteria, scored on a rating scale. The system also includes directives to raters regarding evaluation responsibilities and procedures on how to use the required forms. Training for evaluators is documented and the evaluations are maintained according to the department's retention schedule. Evaluations are conducted on a semiannual basis in March and September which corresponds with shift bids. All agency personnel (sworn and non-sworn) performance evaluations were represented in the files. The evaluation system has a clear appeal process, and no appeals of evaluations occurred during the assessment period.

The agency has an established early warning system. Supervisors use the system consistently and effectively. No employees were identified as needing assistance during the assessment period.

### Promotion of Sworn Personnel

The promotional process is outlined in the collective bargaining agreements. The process includes a point system. During the promotional process, the CEO reviews performance evaluations, training, and other requisite qualifications for promotions when deciding on advancement of personnel.

### Recruitment of Sworn Personnel

The recruitment plan contains a clear statement that the agency is committed to equal opportunity. The stated goals and objectives for recruitment are clear and understandable. The agency has a desire to increase agency diversity; however, the recruitment of qualified personnel based on the agency's minimum standards has become difficult. The agency is dedicated to creating a work force that is representative of the diversity of the community. The department is primarily Caucasian. Sworn staff includes eighty nine males and twelve females, twelve African-American males and two African-American females, one Arabic female and one Hispanic female. Recruitment activities include outreach to the local police academy, community service organizations, schools, and other media outlets.



The agency has had Interview Now, a text based real-time recruiting tool,

### Selection of Personnel

The agency has a complete written process for the selection of new full-time personnel, which includes a thorough background investigation, as well as a medical and psychological exam. Background investigations are conducted by an outside entity as are the medical and psychological exams. The agency uses an active cadet program in an effort to mentor and recruit new personnel and to increase diversity. The selection process includes examinations, panel interviews, and an executive interview. The CEO makes the final decision on selection of new personnel.

### Reserve Officers and Civilian Volunteers

The agency does not have a reserve program; however, they have an active volunteer program, Police Explorers, and a volunteer chaplain program. The Police Explorer program provides experience to young people interested in pursuing a career law enforcement. The explorers are very active and the program is extremely successful. The Explorer Program is a feeder to the cadet rank, which is a feeder to the sworn staff. The department currently employs nineteen sworn officers who were formerly Cadets.

## **Chapter 3 – The Operations Function:**

### Arrest, Search and Seizure

The City of Battle Creek Police Department is a full-service agency with full arrest powers. The agency and its policies follow the U.S. Constitution and the Constitution of the State of Michigan in relation to arrest, and search and seizure practices. The agency recognizes the foundation set forth in the Fourth Amendment.

Agency policy outlines the warrantless search exceptions and the need for a court-authorized search warrant, when applicable. The agency takes arrests directly to the Calhoun County jail for processing and housing. Battle Creek Police have an area in their new police building used exclusively for providing Data Master (breathalyzer) tests for Operating While Intoxicated (OWI) arrests. These detention areas are monitored by a centralized camera system. There are three emergency alarm buttons nearby in the event there were an emergency. Department policy dictates that an additional officer is always present during OWI processing. It is mandatory that officers store their firearms in weapons lockers that are available before entering the weapon restricted areas within the department.

The agency has a good strip search and cavity search policy in place indicating when and where these types of searches are to be conducted, by whom and by what authority. There were no occurrences of either type of search within this accreditation period.

### Interview and Interrogation

The Battle Creek Police Department has established procedures for standards compliance with contemporary criminal procedural requirements related to interviews, investigative detention interviews, and interrogations. The agency has several interview rooms located on the premises including a 'soft interview' room. The interrogation rooms are monitored by another detective in an adjoining room who has the capabilities of activating an emergency alarm. All interview rooms have audio and video recording capability. The agency's written directive indicates that investigative officers are encouraged to use the agency's audio and video taping capabilities for purposes of recording statements and confessions in an overt or covert manner consistent with state law. The policy also indicates that no more than two officers will be inside an interview room during an interview/interrogation.

### Use of Force

Assessors were able to review several use of force reports generated during this assessment period. The reports were well written and concise in nature but thorough in their descriptive language. The initial report is completed by the involved officer and the report is reviewed and approved by their supervisor before it is sent to a higher ranking officer for review. The report indicates whether additional training is needed or if the officer acted within policy guidelines. The agency conducts a thorough internal affairs investigation for each use of force incident. All incidents were justified with no recommended changes to policy or procedure. In the case of fatal shootings where the officer was found to be justified, the officer was appropriately placed on paid administrative leave during the investigation process which was conducted by another agency and submitted to the prosecutor's office for their review.

The agency completed a detailed review of the use of force incidents for the evaluation period. The report went into detail outlining the past five-year history and shows a thorough understanding of what's occurring in the agency as it relates to the community.

### Communications

The Battle Creek Police Department has contracted with the Calhoun County Consolidated Dispatch Authority for about the past twenty years. The Dispatch Center is a full service dispatch authority and the operators are trained in medical emergency dispatching. Assessors were able to view the facilities and see the steps taken in a medical emergency and the recommended charts used by dispatchers and call takers to render aid instructions over the phone while medical services are enroute. All recordings are kept in storage for a minimum of sixty days unless requested by the department for longer retention. Review of the tapes are limited to personnel with a legitimate and official need.

The Dispatch Center has a back-up generator that was observed on-site. The generator will automatically engage if the main power supply is lost thus supplying power to the Dispatch Center to maintain operations. The generator goes through a weekly function

test. According to the facilities Assistant Director there has never been an interruption in service when the power supply has been switched from the main power supply to the generator. The Dispatch Center is equipped with a backup battery power supply system to bridge the gap between the power outage and when the generator begins to provide power. The Assistant Director indicated there is a full load test done on the generator twice per year.

Each dispatch station is set up identically, allowing for dispatchers to move from station to station seamlessly. All emergency medical dispatch is immediately transferred to area Emergency Medical Services working the area. The Dispatch Center provides dispatch services for several communities in the Battle Creek area.

### Field Activities

During the assessment period, there were several motor vehicle and foot pursuits within the City of Battle Creek. The pursuits were authorized for felony crimes only and in 2021 the policy became more restive, authorizing pursuits for assaultive felony crimes. The Battle Creek Police Department policy allows for pursuits by officers who must follow the guidelines appropriately outlined in the policy. The agency employs stop sticks as a method to terminate vehicle pursuits. Training in the use of stop sticks is conducted when an officer is first hired with the agency and retraining takes place with the use of stop sticks during Emergency Vehicle Operations training. All pursuits that were reviewed during this on site were compliant with established department policy and procedures and conformed to the applicable accreditation standards.

The Battle Creek Police Department has in-car computers available in each patrol vehicle, accessible to each patrol officer. The agency also has video recording equipment in their police vehicles and body-worn cameras. Each video is downloaded and retained for a designated time period unless there is some evidentiary value to the video and then it is kept until the disposition of the case. All other retention of video evidence follows the state retention guidelines.

Spanish and Burmese are the areas two predominantly spoken non-English languages. The agency has printed brochures in Spanish and Burmese that inform the person what to do if stopped by the police. The agency also has various forms such a consent to search and Miranda Rights printed in Burmese and Spanish. Officers carry an "I speak" card to assist in identifying the language that a person they come in contact with speaks and understands.

Patrol officers are assigned to enforcement areas as part of an overall patrol enforcement and crime prevention strategy, designed through analysis of data provided by a crime analyst that works in the Fusion Area. The Fusion Area is an area within the Battle Creek Police Department that was created to assist in the sharing of information and resources from various community based organizations and law enforcement agencies including state, local, and federal agencies who work together to solve problems. This is a concept unique to Battle Creek where Homeland Security, for example, works with local organizations to assist in improving quality of life issues with residents and also provides support for local law enforcement agencies in a variety of ways including resource

management. As a result, occurrences of gang related crimes, robberies and larcenies have decreased dramatically over the past several years.

The agency has a foot pursuit policy that complies with the standard. The written directive has a section that states that the reinstatement of a previously terminated pursuit is permitted at the discretion of a supervisor if conditions change.

The assessor attended a patrol briefing. There was a free exchange of information regarding patrol activities and current neighborhood issues that needed to be addressed. The briefing room itself is new and the layout is conducive to conducting effective roll call training.

### Traffic Safety and Enforcement

The Battle Creek Police Department has applicable policies in place regarding traffic violation enforcement, enforcement options, offenders, and traffic direction and control. The directive establishes procedures to conduct motor vehicle stops, including high-risk stops. The enforcement options include warnings, citations, and arrest when appropriate. Assessors observed several proofs of compliance to the standards in regard to the wearing of high visibility vests when working traffic details and crash investigations. Assessor also observed a traffic stop during a ride along which was appropriately handled by the officer.

### Homeland Security/Critical Incidents

The agency has a critical incident system in place, which includes command, operations, planning, logistics and fiscal responsibility. The agency uses Incident Command System strategies effectively while working several events throughout the year including their annual Field of Flight Air Show and Balloon Festival which is a major event the police department has successfully worked for a number of years.

In 2020 all Calhoun County municipalities responded to the COVID pandemic by utilizing Incident Command System. The Unified Command consisted of the Battle Creek City manager, Calhoun County Controller, and the Health Department Director. The Battle Creek Chief of Police acted as Chief of Staff for the Unified Command. All PPE, cleaning supplies, or any COVID related items were purchased/distributed through the Logistic Section which was directed by a Battle Creek Police Department Command Staff member. The Finance Section was directed by the City of Battle Creek and Calhoun County Finance Directors. All purchases/actions were approved through the Unified Command. Operations Section and Planning Sections fell to members of the Battle Creek Police Department Command Staff as well. A Joint Operation Center held daily briefings concerning current issues or upcoming tasks.

Operational plans based on the Incident Command System were prevalent during reviews of drug raids, Presidential visits, or other high risk operations conducted by special operations operatives. After action reports were evident and documented in detail with the exception of debriefings.

## **Chapter 4 – The Investigative Function:**

### Criminal Investigation

Officers perform preliminary investigations from initial contacts. The information is reviewed by a shift supervisor before being sent to the detective bureau for further review before the case is assigned to a detective for follow-up and/or further investigation. Policies are in place for interviewing, interrogation and eyewitness identification. The instructions to witnesses for identification purposes was available and there were ample samples of properly constructed lineups observed during this accreditation on site.

### Crime Scene Processing

The agency has detectives, crime scene investigators and trained laboratory specialists available 24/7 and available to investigate a wide range of crimes including fatal or serious injury traffic crashes, homicides, arson, CSC cases, etc. The agency crime scene personnel are trained in latent fingerprint recovery and identification, photography and videography, crime scene sketching, collection and preservation of evidence, drug identification and other forensic procedures. These investigators have available to them a state-of-the-art forensic crime lab that is IOC Accredited (one of three in the State of Michigan) that is full service with the exception of DNA identification and ballistic comparison.

Officers at crime scenes are trained to keep the crime scenes undisturbed unless a danger exists that the evidence will be lost or destroyed prior to the arrival of detectives and crime scene investigators. Appropriate and standard compliant packaging requirements are in place and chain of custody is appropriately followed and documented.

### Storage of Evidence and Property

Robust policies are in place for property processing and evidence collection. The agency has a, large, well-organized and equipped property room and forensic laboratory. Access to the property room is appropriately limited to the property officer, her assistant and the command officer in charge of them. There is a sign-in log for anyone entering the property room, including MLEAC Assessors during this on-site. Access to the property room is by fobs that are programmed for entry and information regarding access is recorded at an off-site location. The door is also key-locked with video outside and inside the storage areas. There are several two-way lockers for officers to put large items of evidence/property into along with smaller lockers in which evidence is placed and secured until forensic laboratory technicians remove the property, log the property, then place the property/evidence in the property lockers accessed by the property room officer for proper intake and storage.

The agency also has a large inside vehicle bay that can be secured to limit access in cases where a vehicle needs to be processed or for securing large items that cannot be

secured in a evidence/property locker. These areas are also video recorded. The agency has a large safe available for valuable jewelry and money. There is a secure area where weapons are stored. There are two areas within the property room where drugs are kept. One area for bulk items and items destined to be destroyed and the other area for smaller drug items. There is a drug disposal policy in place to properly destroy drugs. The agency uses a local crematorium for the incineration of these items.

In some cases, items are sent to the Michigan State Police Crime Lab in Lansing, Michigan. This process is documented and items sent to the MSP lab are packaged according to MSP evidence packaging standards.

An appropriate policy for transmission and chain of custody is in place. The assessors were shown the procedure first hand from the collection of evidence from the evidence/property locker, to logging the item in the computerized evidence log. The item was then distributed to the appropriate forensic lab area for follow-up processing before going directly to the property room storage locker where the property room officer retrieves the item, logs it as accepted and secures the item in its appropriate place in the property room.

All time-sensitive inspections, audits and inventories were conducted, including a 100% inventory being completed when the Assistant Evidence Technician retired. No irregularities were identified. There were no changes in the property custodian during this assessment period.

Policies are in place for the proper notification of owners of property received and returned to them or to someone designated by the owner.

### Juvenile Matters

The agency has established policies regarding juvenile status offenses, including runaway cases, unidentified children, and the safe delivery of newborns. There were no incidents where the agency needed to use Amber Alerts or the Law Enforcement Information Network (LEIN). There are designated areas where juveniles can be placed for temporary holding or detention. Appropriate forms are used for the petitioning of juveniles to court. Parent notification policies and practices for the release of juveniles are present with appropriate documentation including time limits associated with juvenile processing and holding. Reporting requirements were also observed that comply with accreditation standards. The agency has several child car seats available for use as needed.

### Special Investigations and Operations

The agency has a special investigations policy. The written directives are in compliance with accreditation standards. The agency is well organized in keeping records of information shared with or received from another agency. The agency has appropriate deconfliction procedures in place. The agency utilizes a wide range of technological advances to aid them in their special investigations including smart boards and video

links. Operational supervisors and detectives work together to keep each other informed regarding general investigations as well as special investigations or operations taking place.

The agency hosts a major event each year called the Field of Flight Air Show and Balloon Festival. The operational plans for this event are very inclusive with all sections of the agency involved in the policing of this event identified with a chain of command plainly outlined in the operational plan. Incident Command areas of responsibility are identified in the documentation and execution of the event planning.

Confidential informant policies and procedures are in place and evident in the documentation observed during the on-site.

Battle Creek Command has access to a couple of areas within their building that will provide more than adequate access for working as an effective Emergency Operations Center during critical incidents. One area is located on the first floor of the police department building in the Community Room. The other area is on the second floor next to the Fusion Center where the department has access to a wealth of information and resources from a variety of agencies on the state, federal and local levels. They can also access representatives from several local community organizations. This area was used as the Incident Command Post for recent dignitary visits and BLM demonstrations.

## **Chapter 5 – The Arrestee/Detainee/Prisoner Handling Function:**

### **Transporting/Processing/Holding of Arrestees/Detainees/Prisoners**

The City of Battle Creek Police Department has established procedures for the transportation of arrested subjects, to include searching vehicles prior to the beginning of each shift, prior to and following any transport, and the securing of arrested subjects in restraints during transport. Patrol cars have been modified so the door handles and windows do not operate, and a safety barrier separates the rear compartment.

All custodial arrests are lodged at the Calhoun County Jail. The Battle Creek Police Department has a processing area where arrestees can be given a breathalyzer test prior to being transported to the Calhoun County Jail. The processing room is equipped with an emergency button that sounds an alarm throughout the entire department indicating there is an emergency in the processing area. It is also practice to have two officers in the processing room during processing. There is a secure sally port where lock boxes for weapons will be installed once they arrive. Access to the processing room is controlled by key fob. Officers have the ability to secure arrestees to the bench in the processing area.

### **G. Applied Discretion Compliance Discussion:**

During the on-site, there were no instances of standards being held in applied discretion.

**H. Waivers of Standards:**

This section provides specific information on those standards which qualified for waivers. Waivers are available to agencies when it is impossible to comply with a specific standard. A request to waive standard compliance must be made to the Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police Accreditation Program Director in writing, on official agency letterhead, signed by the CEO. The following standards were granted non-applicable waiver:

*Standard 2.6.1 Reserve/Auxiliary Officers Program*

*Standard 5.3.1 Temporary Detention*

*Standard 5.3.2 Security Protocols*

*Standard 5.3.3 Training*

*Standard 5.3.4 Evacuation/Hazard Protocols*

*Standard 5.3.5 Inspections*

**I. Standards Noncompliance Discussion:**

During the on-site, there were no standards held in non-compliance.

**J. Future Performance / Review Issues:**

The only recommendation provided by the on-site assessment team is to continue the trend of recruitment and retention. Battle Creek Police is a busy department that needs to continue to build strong relationships with the community that it serves. Pulling new hires from the area will be key to continuing that working relationship.

**K. Summary and Recommendation:**

A thorough review of the files for compliance was conducted, as well as observations of compliance; and, after interviews were conducted, it was determined that the agency was in compliance with all of the established accreditation standards, with waivers noted. Reaccreditation is recommended.

Matthew Ivory, Team Leader

Date: 05/26/2022

Reviewed and approved to be scheduled for a hearing before the MLEAC.



Program Director Neal Rossow

Date: May 27, 2022