

**City Club Speech - EJ**  
**September 2019**  
**Maggiano's Banquets - 0730**  
**111 W. Grand Ave.**

Good morning and thank you for the introduction.

You may not know this, but I am not much of a morning person. I'm still wired as a beat cop despite being named Superintendent of the Chicago Police Department almost four years ago.

This job has conditioned me to be a night owl. Having been with the Department for 31 years, I've grown accustomed to getting calls at all hours.

Now a big breakfast can help anyone start their day... even the leader of the second-largest police force in the country.

I found the bacon and eggs you are serving here today to be particularly motivating. So here goes.

First, I want to begin by looking back on the Summer of 2019. I'm pleased to report that crime was down in all major categories this summer compared to last summer.

The credit for these declines goes to our officers. The men and women of CPD worked every weekend this summer.

Many of our officers cancelled vacations and missed family barbecues to patrol high traffic areas such as the beaches and downtown shopping district.

These summer patrols also included additional manpower in the neighborhoods. Officers rode bikes through bustling parks and responded to calls on hot summer nights when tensions can be as high as the temperature.

Our deployment strategy was based largely on technology that debuted in Chicago's 7th or Englewood District in February 2017.

You may have heard me talk about our Strategic Decision Support Centers or SDSC rooms. These digital nerve centers are equipped with surveillance video cameras and gunshot detection systems.

Officers working in these rooms are alerted to gunshots and calls for service in real time. They can then turn on a network of cameras in the area where officers are responding.

I've seen officers within these SDSC rooms catch a shooting on camera and relay a description of the offender as well as the offender's exact location to those enroute to the scene.

In a handful of cases, the officers have arrived while the offender is still firing.

This real time video footage has also helped us provide prosecutors additional evidence that can be used in court, helping with our clearance rate and keeping dangerous people out of the neighborhoods they hold hostage.

The information on calls for service gathered by the SDSC rooms is also combined with 911 calls. Special software then looks at this activity and helps to identify crime patterns.

This analysis is used to deploy officers to likely hot spots. The goal is to deter crime before it even takes place.

I believe this strategy is working, and I point to the 7th District as evidence. The first year the SDSC room was operational in this South Side district, there was a 45 percent reduction in shootings.

Homicides also fell 43 percent compared to the previous year. The reductions in 2017 resulted in the lowest level of gun violence seen in Englewood since the turn of the century.

I want to take a moment to remind everyone here that these aren't simply numbers. These are people's lives.

Individuals who suffer from gunshot wounds never truly heal. Their wounds may mend. The scars may fade, but the experience leaves them forever changed.

Murders are even worse, robbing our city of individuals who might have gone on to do great things.

Gun violence steals mothers of their sons. It tears families apart.

It's with this in mind that we expanded the SDSC rooms. These technology hubs are now in 20 of the 22 police districts throughout the city.

Citywide, there has been a 30 percent reduction in murders since the first SDSC room debuted.

Burglaries and robberies citywide are also down 20 percent during this same period, and shootings are down 30 percent.

The intel we gained from these rooms was what drove our summer violence reduction plan.

I am happy to report that this summer — from Memorial Day to Labor Day — Chicago saw an 18 percent reduction in murders compared to 2018.

Shooting incidents were down nearly 11 percent this summer compared to last summer.

Robberies were also down 12 percent, and burglaries were down a whopping 23 percent in the Summer of 2019, compared to the Summer of 2018.

Now, I am certainly proud of these numbers and of the officers who worked so hard to keep our city safe this summer.

But there is plenty more work to do. Mayor Lightfoot and I both share the same goal: Making Chicago the safest big city in the country.

The only way to achieve this goal is by working hand in hand with the communities we serve.

Community policing is at the core of everything we do for this reason.

Every district has a community policing program. These officers were often tucked away in forgotten corners of their district.

I knew this needed to change. In an effort to do so, I transformed community policing from a program to a department-wide philosophy.

I also brought the CAPS office under the direct supervision of the Superintendent's Office.

I truly believe every cop is a community policing officer. Chicago cannot arrest its way out of our crime problem. We need the community to stand with us.

We need to engage with residents in order to successfully accomplish this goal. That means, we need to do more than

respond to 911 calls.

CPD scoured the country looking for the best ways to accomplish this task. A nationwide search led us to New York, which launched its District Collaboration Officer or DCO program in 2015.

As a lifelong Chicago resident, I'm reluctant to give New York credit for anything. Their pizza is nothing compared to ours, and I'd take the Bears over the Jets or Giants any day.

Still, this program seemed different. Chicago Police officers spend the bulk of their shifts answering calls that come over the radio.

There simply isn't time to get to know people when you are responding to one radio call after another.

The DCO program begins by recognizing this and addresses it by having a dedicated set of police officers who are freed from having to respond to these constant calls.

These officers instead are asked to reach out to those living within their districts and have meaningful conversations about safety.

These conversations can include concerns both big and small from cars speeding near a school to an abandoned house that is drawing a criminal element.

DCOs then work with members of the community as well as officers working in the patrol division and elsewhere within the Department to address these problems.

They even go so far as to hand out their cell phone numbers to residents, giving those within the community a face and a name they can reach out to when they have concerns that don't quite warrant a 911 call.

Another benefit to this program is that communities can see CPD helping them proactively, working to solve lingering problems and building community trust.

If a big incident were to rattle the neighborhood, those residents know CPD has their back, because we proved it already by working with them to remedy these nagging problems.

The DCO program made its Chicago debut in January in the 25th or Grand Central District with 10 dedicated officers.

We recently took an early look at the program and found that calls for service have fallen by 5 percent in this district when compared to other similar districts. These figures were compiled year-to-date through September 1.

Since providing their cell phone numbers to residents within the community, DCOs in this Northwest Side district have returned more than 20,000 phone calls.

These figures tell me that folks living within these neighborhoods are not only utilizing the DCO program, but they are also calling these officers to solve their problems instead of 911.

This has resulted in another tremendous benefit for the Department. Police districts frequently receive low-priority calls that need to be answered but do not pose an immediate threat to public safety.

These are called RAPs or Radio Assignment Pending. Well RAPs are down 90 percent in the 25th District this year through September 1 when compared to other similar districts.

This tells me that residents are reaching out to their DCO officers rather than calling 911 for minor issues. This frees patrol officers to respond to more calls for service and more quickly.

CPD also tracks positive community interactions. These are also up by 90 percent in the 25th District for this same year-to-date period.

It's with this in mind that the DCO program will be expanded to the 15th or Austin District in November. Commander Ernest Cato is eager to implement the program within his West Side district.

While the early signs are very promising, the pilot program will be evaluated by a research team at Northwestern University before we look to bring the DCO program to neighborhoods throughout the city.

I also want to take some time this morning to talk about CPD's detective division. Clearance rates are a concern for the Department as well as those living on the blocks we are sworn to serve and protect.

Police officers grow weary of arresting the same people again and again.

Those living on blocks with a known troublemaker also might reach out to CPD to help solve the problem.

But if we arrest an individual — particularly for a gun offense — and that person returns to that same block why would those good people call us again and risk retaliation?

I wouldn't. Would you?

Now, pointing out the flaws in the system is a fine first step, but it won't solve the problem. Cook County State's Attorney Kim Foxx and I are working together to come up with solutions.

You may have heard that she and I don't get along. That's not true. The Superintendent and the State's Attorney need to work together for the good of everyone.

I like to compare the relationship to a marriage. We may not see eye to eye on every issue. Occasionally, someone might even have to sleep on the couch.

That doesn't mean we don't come together when it matters most. Perhaps the best example of this is our shared effort to embed Assistant State's Attorneys into six CPD districts throughout the city.

The idea here is that prosecutors are in on the ground floor of an investigation. They have input on what evidence is collected, how that evidence is collected and ultimately how it is presented to a judge.

The result has been that successful prosecutions in these districts are up 60 percent. The conviction rate for gun crimes is near 80 percent.

This just shows that collaboration between police and prosecutors is essential for all of us as we strive to make Chicago a safer place to live, work and play.

Successful prosecutions nowadays also increasingly rely on video evidence and cell phone data.

Detectives have long known this and came up with a great idea after seeing the SDSC rooms within their districts.

They wanted an SDSC room specifically for detectives. We call these rooms Area Tech Centers or ATCs.

Each of the three detective areas throughout the City now have an ATC. I want to thank Ken Griffin and the University of Chicago's CrimeLab for funding this effort.

These rooms are designed to give detectives the technology necessary to recreate an incident and track a suspect.

A sergeant, detectives, police officers and an analyst trained in this technology work together to gather information.

This includes collecting pictures, text messages, social media posts and location data from a suspect's cell phone.

The ATCs can also quickly pull surveillance video from the more than 40,000 cameras that are placed throughout the city.

The technology within the ATC also allows detectives to pull video footage from private security camera footage too.

Detectives no longer have to wait for special software to be able to play video from any variety of recording devices. The ATCs cut through all of that, allowing detectives to quickly gather evidence.

The latest example of the benefit of these ATCs came just last week in the case of Michael Blackman.

Mr. Blackman is a suspect in the daytime shooting of a 28-year-old woman who was on her way to lunch in the busy Fulton Market District.

Detectives working with the ATCs were able to gather surveillance video of the shooting, which was distributed with the help of the media.

Tips poured in, eventually leading us to a bike shop where Mr. Blackman had a tire repaired just moments before the shooting.

Footage from the bike shop gave us a clear picture of Mr. Blackman.

Detectives were able to track Mr. Blackman using video evidence to his residence in the West Englewood neighborhood.

After answering the front door, Mr. Blackman fled out the back of the house, where officers were waiting for him.

Mr. Blackman then opened fire on a Chicago Police officer, striking him twice in the leg and once in the groin. The officer returned fire but did not hit the suspect.

The officer lost roughly a third of his blood, but we expect him to make a full recovery.

Officers on the scene rushed the injured officer to the hospital. The officer also used a special tourniquet kit he was carrying with him at the time to reduce the bleeding.

For six hours after shooting the officer, Mr. Blackman hid just blocks away. Again, detectives used video footage to track him down. He again fled and opened fire on police officers near the railroad tracks in the area.

Mr. Blackman was shot multiple times in the exchange. He was then apprehended and taken to Christ Hospital.

Mr. Blackman was charged with five counts of attempted murder on Monday. He is expected to recover from his injuries.

Detectives working alongside SWAT teams and others did a remarkable job in this case. The ATCs undoubtedly helped us track down the suspect.

Detectives used this same technology to track down a pair of offenders wanted in connection with a shooting that took place on Monday in the 200 block of South Michigan Avenue.

Eighteen-year-old Angel Martinez was charged Wednesday with aggravated discharge of a firearm and aggravated unlawful use of a weapon in the incident that resulted in the window of a bakery along the Mag Mile being damaged by a bullet.

Martinez also had two other warrants and was arrested with a 17-year-old female. This juvenile offender was also charged with aggravated unlawful use of a weapon.

The bottom line is this: Chicago is second only to London in terms of the number of surveillance cameras in use.

So if you decide to commit a crime, there's a good chance you are going to be caught on video.

Video tapes don't lie under oath. They don't need to be sworn in to testify. So if you want to argue with the tape, I can only say good luck.

This technology along with Chicago's efforts in community policing, improving transparency and more will all be on display from October 26-29 at the International Association of Chiefs of Police.

Chicago's McCormick Place will host the conference that brings thousands of police chiefs from throughout the country together to talk about ways to improve public safety.

In 2016, I never would have imagined hosting this conference. Back then, murders and shootings were at near record highs.

I think we have turned a corner since then, and I'm seeing other cities turn to us looking for how we accomplished this about face.

Now again, I realize there is more to do. Guns and gangs continue to threaten our way of life.

But I firmly believe Chicago is on the right path, and I look forward to sharing our story with others.

With that, I'll take some questions. But before I do, I'd like to remind everyone to Stay Safe.

And Go Bears!