PREFACE

I am proud to serve as Cuyahoga County’s first County Executive. My background in law enforcement has given me first-hand knowledge of the importance that public safety plays in safe neighborhoods and the vitality of a community. I have committed to promoting strong and safe neighborhoods, a commitment that began when my new administration took office in 2011.

This Public Safety Plan incorporates cutting-edge theories and practices that encourage data-driven processes and collaborative efforts among stakeholders. All the resources of our new government continue to develop and strengthen our public safety efforts. We have implemented increased community policing efforts, introduced emergency preparedness initiatives and streamlined administrative processes to providing public safety, all while watching and controlling the costs affiliated with these important matters.

Upon taking office, I made a commitment to implementing a county-wide public safety initiative and I spelled out this commitment in the Western Reserve Plan. In an effort to drive collaboration and encourage the sharing of information and techniques, I reorganized the various agencies that address public safety and justice services. These agencies include the Sheriff’s Office, Office of the Medical Examiner, Clerk of Courts, Law Department and Department of Public Safety and Justice Services.

The Public Safety Plan is organized into two sections. The first section details Cuyahoga County’s public safety achievements since January 2011. The second section identifies current and future Cuyahoga County public safety initiatives which focus on the promotion of strong and safe neighborhoods.

Edward FitzGerald
Cuyahoga County Executive
JUSTICE SECTION
Departmental Overview

Sheriff’s Office
The Cuyahoga County Sheriff’s Office is dedicated to maintaining the trust and respect of those served, enforcing the law and committing law enforcement agents to the efficient and effective delivery of safety services. As an agent of the community, the Sheriff’s Office strives to provide appropriate custodial care along with programs that support the physical, spiritual, and constitutional needs of individuals committed to Cuyahoga County Correction Center custody.

Department of the County Medical Examiner
The Department of the County Medical Examiner replaced the Coroner's Office when the Cuyahoga County Charter was passed in 2010. The Department is a public service agency responsible for the investigation of violent, suspicious, sudden, and unexpected deaths and the provision of first class laboratory services. This agency is committed to the promotion of improved public health of the citizens of Cuyahoga County and providing dignified and compassionate service to our citizens during extremely emotional times. These duties are performed with impartiality and the highest level of professionalism while utilizing all available technology. Additionally, the Cuyahoga County Regional Forensic Science Laboratory supports the investigative functions of the Medical Examiner and staff and performs scientific examinations in the areas of trace evidence, serology, DNA, parentage and identification, toxicology, controlled substance analysis and forensic chemistry.

Clerk of Courts
The Cuyahoga County Clerk of Courts is responsible for performing all statutory duties related to the filing, preservation, retrieval, and public dissemination of all applicable court documents and records pertaining to the Cuyahoga County Court of Common Pleas General and Domestic Relations divisions, as well as the Eighth District Court of Appeals. Additional responsibilities include the collection, holding in trust, and disbursement of court costs. All of these responsibilities are fundamental for a well-functioning justice system.

One of the most important roles fulfilled by the Clerk of Courts is the collection of court fees and fines ordered by the judiciary. These sums may be in the form of filing fees, penalties, court costs and other amounts ordered by the court. Collected sums may be placed in the County's General Fund for future projects.
Public Safety and Justice Services (PSJS)
The Cuyahoga County Department of Public Safety and Justice Services (PSJS) was established by the Cuyahoga County Executive and Cuyahoga County Council in 2011 to provide for the public safety and justice service needs of first responders and the community as a whole. The DPSJS consists of five divisions: Administration, Emergency Management, Regional Enterprise Data Sharing System, Mediation, and Witness/Victim Services Center. The DPSJS manages public safety grants, assists communities in emergency management, and aids victims in navigating the criminal justice system.

Department of Law
The Department of Law was established to provide in-house legal representation of the County and its agencies. The Director of Law was established by the passage of our County Council and serves as legal counsel to the County Executive and County Council. The Director of Law provides legal expertise on matters that arise within the Cuyahoga County government, including contract negotiation, drafting of legislation and the issuance of legal opinions on pertinent issues. The Law Department works closely with all county agencies and recently lead Cuyahoga County’s legal team in the monumental property consolidation negotiations that will centralize operations for years to come.
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SECTION I: EARLY ACHIEVEMENTS

This section highlights public safety successes in Cuyahoga County since 2011. These achievements illuminate some of the immediate matters addressed by Cuyahoga County and include initiatives from all involved county agencies. These accomplishments are not only designed to provide safety and security for our community but also to encourage and foster collaborative efforts and efficiencies throughout the delivery of our services. Most importantly, they are all focused on ensuring the safety and security of the citizens in Cuyahoga County and the public safety first responder community.

1.0 Medical Services at the Cuyahoga County Correction Center

The Sheriff’s Office has made strides in inmate welfare while maintaining efficient and effective jail operations. Recently, Cuyahoga County hired a Medical Director of Cuyahoga Jail Medical Services, who oversees the provision of medical care within the jail, performs Continuous Quality Improvement Studies, and manages the day-to-day operations of the jail medical facility.

In addition to hiring a Medical Director, Cuyahoga County entered into an agreement with MetroHealth Systems to provide hospital services, off-site care, pharmaceutical services, on-site physician services, and supplemental services to inmates of the Cuyahoga County Correction Center. This agreement has resulted in significant cost-savings for the County.

As part of the agreement with MetroHealth, the Cuyahoga County Correction Center has instituted a Telemedicine Program with doctors and nurses from MetroHealth to observe patients in real-time. This technology significantly reduces transport time and personnel costs while still providing the necessary level of quality care.

1.1 Department of Public Safety and Justice Services (DPSJS)

In September 2011, the Cuyahoga County DPSJS was created. Previously, the Cuyahoga County Office of Justice Affairs housed the majority of justice services, including Treatment Alternatives to Street Crime (TASC) and Reentry services (since moved to the Cuyahoga County Department of Health and Human Services).

The new administration saw a need to keep public safety and justice services under the same department, while removing those offices that were unrelated or better suited elsewhere. As a result, the DPSJS was established. By doing so, the public safety needs of first responders and communities were placed in the forefront.
1.2 Department of Law (DOL)

The Cuyahoga County Charter passed in 2010 created the position of County Director of Law. The Director leads the newly created Department of Law in providing legal representation to the County Executive, County Council and other county agencies. The DOL has a General Division and Risk Management Division. The General Division provides legal counsel on a variety of issues including budgetary issues, interpretation of the County Charter, drafting of legislation, contract negotiations, labor negotiations and real estate transactions. The Risk Management Division focuses on insurance coverage and protection of county assets.

Since its creation, the DOL has provided legal representation for the following matters:

- Establishing the $100,000,000 Economic Development fund to invest in job growth and economic development in Cuyahoga County;
- Establishing processes for the County’s Contracting and Purchasing Ordinance;
- Establishing the procedures for the use of alternate construction project delivery methods; and
- Establishing the procedures for authorization of settlement.

The DOL also played a pivotal role in protecting Cuyahoga County residents’ right to continue to vote by mail.

The DOL worked to consistently amend the certifications of the County’s collective bargaining units to reflect the legal changes that were brought about by the Charter’s reorganization of county government. The Department established a new framework for its collective bargaining negotiations to fulfill the Charter’s mandate on standardization of benefits and other matters and has successfully represented the County in representation petitions.

1.3 Office of Emergency Management (OEM)

The Cuyahoga County Office of Emergency Management (OEM) works closely with local jurisdictions to help coordinate resources and emergency management activities during an emergency event. Although a local jurisdiction always maintains control and manages its local event, the OEM assists in resource coordination and discussions with the Ohio Emergency Management Agency at state and federal levels. In addition, OEM assists local jurisdictions with preparedness efforts through training, outreach, plan development, and exercise.
The Office’s mission is to coordinate emergency preparedness activities with communities and Citizens in Cuyahoga County, and assist in preventing, protecting, responding, and recovering from major events to minimize the impact on lives, property, and the economy. – Edward Fitzgerald, Cuyahoga County Executive

OEM has undergone reorganization in an effort to provide more efficient and effective services to the public safety community and our residents.

These changes and activities have included:

- Hiring of an Emergency Management Administrator, Training & Outreach Manager, and Chief Planner
- Creation of the position of Operations Manager
- The re-structuring of OEM’s organization to mirror the Ohio Emergency Management Agency
- Entering an agreement with the City of Cleveland to allow joint usage of Cleveland’s Emergency Operations Center
- Assessing locations for Cuyahoga County Emergency Operations Center
- Reconfiguring the Cuyahoga County Urban Area Working Group. The body has been renamed the Cuyahoga County Emergency Services Advisory Board.

1.4 Interoperable Communications

Achieving interoperability in Cuyahoga County

Cuyahoga County is committed to becoming a nationwide example of interoperability. Often, large scale emergency events are not restricted to a single jurisdictional or municipal boundary; emergency responders rely on interoperable communications to share vital information across disciplines and jurisdictions. Currently, the majority of emergency response agencies in this country are not able to communicate internally or externally.

Cuyahoga County has committed to focus interoperability efforts countywide on the Technology Success element of the Department of Homeland Security’s Interoperability Continuum. Although each element is important, the Technology Success element will be the most influential in ensuring Cuyahoga County continues to progress in the area of interoperability.
Cuyahoga County has allocated general funds and grant monies toward the establishment of the Multi-Agency Radio Communications (MARCS\textsuperscript{IP}) Project 25 (P25) Radio System in Cuyahoga County, the City of Cleveland’s purchase and implementation of an 800 MHz APCO Project 25 Digital Trunked Radio Communications System, and the purchase of end-user 800 MHz radios. These systems will allow interoperability with each other and with other existing Project 25 radio systems. Further, these systems will be able to provide command and control communication for every public safety agency in Cuyahoga County.

All County general fund and grant dollars used to enhance public safety communications will be spent with a goal of increasing interoperability along the Technology Success element continuum. Cuyahoga County’s will continue to strive to assist jurisdictions with divergent radio systems to establish interoperability within existing or upcoming P25 systems.

1.5 ASCLD-LAB Accreditation

In 2011, the Medical Examiner’s Office received accreditation by the American Society of Crime Lab Directors – Laboratory Accreditation Board (ASCLD-LAB). There are currently 216 ASCLD-LAB accredited laboratories nationwide. This signifies that Cuyahoga County Medical Examiner’s Office adheres to certain laboratory testing and practices that are replicable and meet quality assurance standards set by ASCLD-LAB. Overall, it raises the standards of the Cuyahoga County Medical Examiner’s Office by ensuring scientific credibility and accuracy.

While Ohio does not yet require that Crime Lab results submitted in court be obtained from an ASCLD-LAB laboratory, many states already incorporate this requirement into their rules of procedure and it is likely that Ohio will follow suit. As a result, this accreditation places the Medical Examiner’s Office at the forefront of scientific public safety initiatives in this state.
SECTION II: INITIATIVES

2.0 Community Policing – Impact Units

The Cuyahoga County Community Policing Impact Unit (IU) is an initiative developed by the Cuyahoga County Executive to strengthen the partnership between the Sheriff’s Office and local law enforcement.

The mission of the Impact Unit is to assist local law enforcement agencies with crime solving and to aid in all facets of community oriented policing while supplementing existing law enforcement areas.

In addition, the Cuyahoga County Sheriff’s Office works closely with local communities and integrates deputies into local law enforcement. The IU provides resources from the Sheriff’s Office to municipalities. These resources equipment, manpower and other resources specifically identified by municipalities. IUs can be requested to supplement existing law enforcement areas within a community.

“We made a promise to our neighborhoods, citizens and law enforcement partners that we would assist in Community Policy efforts in our communities and we will help solve problems. We have achieved successes, we will work together to achieve more.” – Edward FitzGerald, Cuyahoga County Executive

The main functions of the IUs are:

- Neighborhood canvassing
- Area surveillance
- Robbery investigation
- Traffic Enforcement in areas determined to be high accident areas
- Traffic Enforcement in areas determined to be high DWUI areas
- Checkpoints to look for witnesses or suspects
- Other approved areas of enforcement

The IU program began on March 22, 2012, with a launch event at Warrensville Heights City Hall. Warrensville Heights was the first community to avail itself to the assistance of the IU and 23 additional jurisdictions have subsequently used the IU resources. As of January 1, 2013, the Impact Unit has made 231 felony arrests, 322 misdemeanor arrests, issued 671 traffic citations, and 519 warning citations. In addition, the IU has executed 13 search warrants, worked 425 warrants, recovered 15 stolen vehicles, seized 17 firearms, and seized approximately $57,000 from both drug and prostitution activities.
2.1 Cuyahoga County and City of Cleveland Correction Center Consolidation

Cuyahoga County is working diligently to enter into an agreement with the City of Cleveland to provide all City of Cleveland jail services. It is anticipated that this agreement will save the City of Cleveland approximately $5,000,000 per year.

This goal of this initiative is to reduce taxpayer costs for jail services by developing a more expeditious and efficient booking and board and care process. In addition, new processes and protocols will reduce the amount of time spent by City of Cleveland Police Officers at the jail during prisoner drop-off. This process will allow the officers to spend more time on the streets, on patrol and ensuring citizen safety.

2.2 Outstanding Warrants

County Executive FitzGerald is committed to reducing the number of outstanding warrants. The initiative lead by the Sheriff’s Office, working in tandem with the Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Court and the Cuyahoga County Prosecutor’s Office, focuses on verifying warrants issued between 1950 and 1985.

The overall goal of the Sheriff’s Office was to decrease the overall number of active warrants by 15% by December 31, 2012.

Since the inception of the program the Sheriff’s Office has reduced active warrants by 24.1% (December 31, 2012 12,500 active warrants, a decrease of 3,971).

Warrants issued by the Common Pleas Court are researched and entered into the Law Enforcement Automated Data System (LEADS) and the National Crime Information Center database (NCIC). These databases allow the Sheriff’s Office to provide nationwide notification to all law enforcement and criminal justice agencies that a person is wanted and is actively being pursued. More fugitives are apprehended using LEADS and NCIC than any other method.

The Sheriff’s Office is a partner in an initiative called “Crime Stoppers” which encourages citizens to provide tips about a wanted fugitive, in exchange for a reward. Finally, the Sheriff’s Office has its own website, Twitter, and Facebook page where citizens can find information and submit tips anonymously. To date, 1,562 Facebook featured fugitives have been taken into custody.
2.3 Crime Stoppers

As part of the County Executive’s commitment to public safety, the County Executive pledged to expand the Crime Stoppers program. As a result, on December 6, 2012, Cuyahoga County Executive announced the new Crime Stoppers program. The expanded program led by the County Sheriff’s Office, focuses on fugitives throughout Cuyahoga County, offering a regional public safety approach. The Crime Stoppers program is an effective program that facilitates tips and information from citizens to law enforcement through reenactments, web tips, and community partnerships. To supplement these efforts, Channel 19 News airs a weekly program, “Wheel of Justice,” that features a person wanted by the Sheriff’s Office. In addition, The Plain Dealer also features wanted fugitives. These initiatives have provided successful apprehension of wanted criminals as well as providing publicity to the work performed by the Sheriff’s Office.

2.4 Sheriff’s Office Regional Gun Range

In 1977, the Sheriff’s Office indoor gun range opened in coordination with the opening of the Justice Center complex. When the gun range opened, it had state-of-the-art equipment and technology that surpassed the capabilities of other gun ranges in the area. Additionally, numerous communities used these facilities for training purposes.

Since its opening, the number of agencies and individuals within Cuyahoga County and beyond who use the indoor gun range has significantly increased; however there have not been any significant upgrades or improvements to the range over the last 35 years.

In an effort to continue to provide modern training facilities, Cuyahoga County will be replacing its current range with a regional range. The regional range will be available for use by all law enforcement agencies in the county. Further, as various law enforcement entities require upgrades to their gun ranges, they will be eligible to contract with Cuyahoga County for use of the regional gun range.

2.5 Countywide Sexual Assault Guidelines

Recognizing the lack of a coordinated approach to how Cuyahoga County communities respond to and investigate sexual assaults and related crimes, the Cleveland Rape Crisis Center, County Executive FitzGerald, and the Cuyahoga County Police Chief's Association convened police chiefs, SANE professionals, first responders, and social workers from across the county to develop a model sexual assault policy that can be adopted by any municipality.

“As we look at opportunities for local communities to collaborate with each other, creating an appropriate, consistent, and professional response for victims of sexual assault throughout the county is a high priority.”
— Edward FitzGerald, Cuyahoga County Executive

“The details of how a sex crime case is handled are extremely important,” Megan O’Bryan from the Rape Crisis Center said. “Small missteps in communicating with the victim and investigating the case can quickly lead to failed investigations. With a modest amount of guidance, every police department in our community can develop and execute an effective policy.”
These sexual assault response guidelines are offered for use by law enforcement agencies responsible for investigating and reporting incidents of sexual assault within their jurisdiction and may be used in conjunction with the law enforcement agency’s existing general operating procedures. It is not intended to alter the independent authority of law enforcement agencies to conduct the investigation of a sexual assault complaint nor does it alter the authority of a county prosecutor to investigate crimes committed within the county.

2.6 Northeast Ohio Regional Fusion Center

The Northeast Ohio Regional Fusion Center (NEORFC) is a collaborative effort that provides resources, expertise, and information in an effort to maximize the ability to detect, prevent, investigate, and respond to criminal and terrorist activity. The fusion process allows the exchange of information from different sources, including law enforcement, public safety and the private sector. The availability of unified information allows tactical decision-making.

The main functions of the NEORFC are:

- Law enforcement information sharing and intelligence gathering;
- Critical infrastructure protection; and
- Terrorism awareness and training

The NEORFC supports Ohio Homeland Security Region 2 which encompasses Ashtabula, Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, and Lorain Counties. It is governed by an Executive Board of Directors with representatives from local, regional, state, and federal agencies. The NEORFC was originally formed under the direction of the Cuyahoga County Department of Justice Affairs in January 2008 and its offices are located in the Cleveland Police Headquarters.

2.7 Missing Persons Website

Recent events have highlighted the need for a countywide Missing Persons Database. This database will simplify the current cumbersome process which has frustrated the efforts of both law enforcement and the public.

The database and website will be updated on a “real time” basis and will have the capability to display multiple photos, analyze data, and allow the user to print missing person posters. The Missing Persons Website will be a tool for both citizens and law enforcement and will allow citizens to directly contact police agencies and detectives assigned to a missing persons case.

Currently, the County Sheriff’s Office works with suburbs to place active missing persons on the Sheriff’s Facebook page.
2.8 Emergency Operations Center

The Office of Emergency Management (OEM) is dedicated to building a state-of-the-art Emergency Operations Center (EOC) for use by all of Cuyahoga County. An Emergency Operations Center is the operations area from which emergency response activities can be directed, coordinated, and/or supported.

Currently, the OEM relies on the City of Cleveland’s EOC when EOC activation is necessary. To formalize this partnership, the OEM and City of Cleveland Office of Emergency Management have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding that outlines the roles and responsibilities that exist when the EOC is shared with County OEM.

One of the most significant benefits of building a new EOC is the ability to co-locate the OEM, EOC, and the Cuyahoga Emergency Communications System (CECOMS) in the same building. This provides the OEM staff the ability to activate the EOC while maintaining access to files, software, and equipment that is stored in OEM offices. In addition, the EOC will have state-of-the-art technology which will enhance communication capabilities between on-scene responders, dispatchers, and EOC staff.

On March 14, 2012, the Cuyahoga County Department of Public Safety and Justice Services released a Request for Information regarding the development of a Cuyahoga County Emergency Operations Center. On February 4, 2013, an update was released to public safety stakeholders, announcing that a potential EOC location in Broadview Heights, Ohio was selected.

2.9 School Preparedness Initiative

On May 22, 2012, the OEM was awarded grant funds in the amount of $28,000 to support School Emergency Response Planning. The OEM worked with Parma City School District to develop plans and procedures that will serve as a template for all schools in Cuyahoga County.

Application for the grant was spurred by County Executive FitzGerald’s commitment to the safety and security of students in the wake of the tragic incident at Chardon High School.

In addition to the grant, OEM held a Senior Officials Workshop for School Officials in October, 2012, in coordination with the Texas Engineering Extension Service (TEEX). The course was open to all school officials in Cuyahoga County and offered tools and information about planning for emergency events within a school building.
2.10 Countywide Consolidated Dispatch

The DPSJS is leading the effort to reduce the number of Public Safety Answering Points countywide. A Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) is a dispatch center. A PSAP may answer calls and dispatch first responders to a location, or it may transfer calls to the appropriate PSAP based on caller location.

In 2012, Cuyahoga County completed a detailed assessment of all 48 PSAPs. The purpose of the study was to determine where overlap between the PSAPs existed and to develop a plan for efficiencies, including possible consolidations. The overall goal of the study was to determine the feasibility of reducing the number of PSAPs and thereby reducing dollars spent in the duplication of communication and safety services.

Some results from the assessment:

- The average age of 911 equipment throughout the County is 9.8 years
- The average annual cost to operate a PSAP (outside of the City of Cleveland) is $509,498
- Countywide there are 458 dispatchers including both full and part-time employees
- Countywide there are 134 dispatching workstations

The study recommended that Cuyahoga County work toward reducing the number of PSAPs through continued support of consolidation and the promotion of regionalism.

Currently, 48 PSAPs support the 59 jurisdictions in this county. Cuyahoga County has the largest number of PSAPs in the state of Ohio and has one of the highest number of PSAP’s in the nation. While Cuyahoga County has always encouraged a decrease in the number of countywide PSAPs, current technologies such as Next Generation 9-1-1, and a statewide build-out of the Emergency Services Internet Protocol Network, supports a regional approach to this process.

Such a regional approach aligns with the County’s mission to offer the most efficient and effective public safety services to the citizens of Cuyahoga County.

Cuyahoga County will be releasing a 911 Master Plan which highlights the framework the County will be used to support PSAP consolidation countywide.

2.11 Countywide Emergency Medical Dispatching Protocol

The OEM has identified the need for a Countywide Emergency Medical Dispatching (EMD) protocol. Currently, only 62% of Cuyahoga County dispatch centers have standardized EMD protocols and virtually none share the same protocols. Even among the 62% with standardized protocols, the type of software and products used by dispatchers for EMD varies.

As a result, an ad hoc Emergency Medical Dispatching Committee was formed to address the need for a countywide policy. Participation on the committee was solicited from public safety and communications professionals.

The Committee’s goal is to develop baseline procedures and policies to be used by dispatchers during emergency situations. The Committee will meet regularly and work to standardize baseline procedures, protocols, training, and procurement of EMD products.
2.12 Regional Enterprise Data Sharing System Strategic Plan

The Cuyahoga County Regional Enterprise Data Sharing System (REDSS) (formerly CRIS) is Cuyahoga County’s solution to its public safety IT needs. REDSS is an integrated suite of public safety software customized to meet the needs of public safety entities and criminal justice agencies. REDSS uses a unified systems model that leverages the county’s expertise in public safety IT, bringing state-of-the-art applications built on an integrated platform and architecture. As a result of this approach, Cuyahoga County is developing products and services that work together, decreasing the burden on users who have previously been required to develop complex interface solutions between various vendors to achieve full IT interoperability.

2.13 Family Justice Center (FJC)

The FJC will create a one-stop center for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse and elder abuse. The model is designed to address pitfalls commonly faced by victims. Instead of facing a fragmented system, those seeking services at the FJC will experience a more coordinated, collaborative, victim-centered service delivery system with increased data and information sharing capabilities.

As a result of opening the Center, vulnerable citizens will experience better outcomes through coordinated case management and a more fluid exchange of information and resources among professionals. The model is cost effective with a lean administrative budget and significant in-kind contribution from onsite partners.

Expected results from the FJC are:

- Decreases in domestic violence related homicides
- Decreases in overall domestic violence rates
- Increase in perpetrator accountability through arrest and prosecution
- Increase in community collaboration
- Improvement in services to vulnerable population

It is anticipated that a FJC in Cuyahoga County will open to the public sometime in 2013.

2.14 Delinquent Court Cost Reduction Plan

The Cuyahoga County Delinquent Court Cost Reduction Plan is designed to reduce the amount of uncollected court costs while recommending non-traditional alternatives to Court Cost Collection. Overall, this will result in a significant decrease in the amount of uncollected court costs while incurring minimal costs for the implementation of collection measures.

The County will use innovative and non-traditional collection methods to gather these costs and will utilize innovative techniques and partners in both the private and public sectors to retrieve unpaid amounts. Currently, Cuyahoga County is working with two private collection firms and has partnered with the Ohio Attorney General’s Office to assist in this process.
2.15 National Association of Medical Examiners

In 2012, the Cuyahoga County Medical Examiner’s Office received accreditation by the National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME). Currently, there are only 69 NAME accredited Medical Examiners in the country and only 6 in Ohio.

NAME is the national professional organization of physician medical examiners, medical death investigators, and death investigation system administrators who perform the official duties of the medico legal investigation of deaths of public interest in the United States. Receiving the NAME accreditation presents another major accomplishment for the newly formed Medical Examiner’s Office and was achieved within one-year of Dr. Thomas Gilson taking over the operations of the County Medical Examiner. The accreditation, which requires an inspection and report, noted that, “The office has a strong commitment to excellence in all areas of medico legal death investigations. Cleveland should take pride in its Medical Examiner’s Office and the Regional Forensic Science Center.”

In addition to NAME, the office is accredited by the Accreditation Council of Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) to provide medical training in forensic pathology.

2.16 American Board of Forensic Toxicology Accreditation

The Cuyahoga County Medical Examiner’s Office and the Cuyahoga County Regional Forensic Science Laboratory, expect to achieve American Board of Forensic Toxicology accreditation in the spring of 2013. This will make the office and regional crime lab the most highly accredited public office and crime lab in the United States.

2.17 Regional Crime Laboratory

Cuyahoga County is committed to establishing a regional Crime Laboratory. The Cuyahoga County Regional Forensic Science Laboratory began as a partnership between the Medical Examiner, Cuyahoga County Sheriff’s Office, Cuyahoga County Prosecutor and City of Cleveland. It will provide millions of dollars of resources annually to local law enforcement and justice agencies. The Crime Lab will provide law enforcement scientifically with innovative testing capabilities, shorter access to test results, and detailed expert testimony. All of these practices will lead to reliable and affordable forensic results.

Costs for staff, equipment, space, and supplies exceed $3 million annually. With generous partnerships, some of these costs are defrayed.

In addition to ASCLD-LAB accreditation, the Crime Lab will also hold accreditation from the American Association of Blood Banks (AABB) as well as FBI Quality Assurance Standards for inclusion in the Combined and National DNA Index Systems.
2.18 Northern Border Initiative

In 2009, a threat assessment of the entire port region in Northeast Ohio was conducted. This assessment resulted in the development of the Port-Wide Risk Mitigation Plan. This plan identified several gaps in prevention efforts in the Northeast Ohio region.

In an effort to mitigate one of the gaps, the Northeast Ohio Region Area Maritime Security Subcommittee (NEORAMSS), established the Cuyahoga County Public Safety Marine Patrol (CCPSMP) to increase law enforcement presence on the water.

The Cuyahoga County Public Safety Marine Patrol consists of the following partners:

- Cuyahoga County Sheriff’s Office
- Cleveland Police Department
- Lakewood Police Department

The CCPSMP expanded law enforcement presence established a public safety dive team and emphasized information sharing between jurisdictions. Additionally, the Cuyahoga County Sheriff’s Office deputized the officers patrolling the border, granting these new deputies jurisdictional authority over the waterways to the Canadian border.

The Cuyahoga County Public Safety Marine Patrol enforces all state and local laws, assists in all rescue and safety efforts, and serves as patrol to all critical infrastructures along the border, including the water intake and power plants.

The Sheriff’s Office boat serves as the CCPSMP boat, as well as the dive platform for the public safety dive team. The dive team consists of 27 members from the Sheriff’s Office, Cleveland Police Department, and the Cleveland Fire Department who collaboratively serve all the lake front communities in Cuyahoga County.

The Public Safety Marine Patrol boat is equipped with state of the art sonar, radar, and nuclear detection devices and is funded by proceeds from the Port Security Grant Program. Because Cuyahoga County is situated between two large nuclear power plants, the Cuyahoga County Public Safety Marine Patrol is a first line of defense against threats to our nuclear energy companies.

Training has been provided by request, at no cost, by the United States Coast Guard and Ohio Department of Natural Resources.

2.19 Regional Jail Consolidation / Central Booking

Currently, Cuyahoga County is examining potential expansion of the Sheriff’s presence throughout the County by either providing regional booking centers and/or regional jails throughout Cuyahoga County. This project may include an expansion of the Transport Unit, increase in corrections officers, and an increase in corrections medical personnel. Anticipated benefits of incorporating a regional approach to booking and jail will include consistent policies and procedures related to booking and jail operations. In addition, by regionalizing these services municipalities can appropriately allocate law enforcement and dispatch personnel while corrections officers maintain jail operations. It is anticipated that significant amounts of time and resources will be saved by utilizing a centralized booking process.