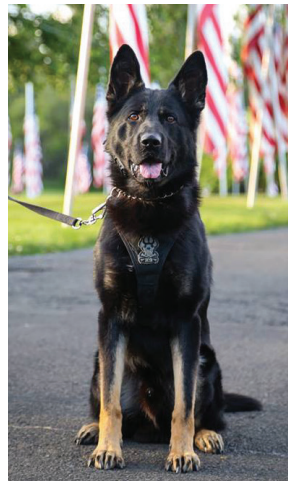




Spokane Police Department Two Year Strategic Plan 2020-2021





A Message from the Chief

It is my pleasure to present the Spokane Police Department's (SPD) Two-Year Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan serves as the roadmap that directs the work of SPD over the next two years. It provides the framework for operations, work performance, and focus for every SPD employee, whether commissioned or non-commissioned. It also aligns with the City's Strategic Plan.

SPD's Strategic Plan provides details on the primary goals for the department for 2020 and 2021:

- Collaborative approach in helping individuals experiencing behavioral health concerns
- Help create a safer, healthier, and more supportive environment for all residents and visitors
- Focused vehicle theft reduction
- Property crime reduction utilizing new programs involving municipal courts
- Fostering community partnerships and relationships
- Developing and retaining a qualified, diverse workforce
- Maintaining a progressive approach in best practices revolving around hiring, training, equipment, programs and service to the community and our employees

Police departments across the nation are facing high expectations, multiple competing interests, limited budgets, intense scrutiny and advancing technology. More than ever, we find ourselves wearing multiple hats—law enforcer, counselor, mediator, mental health professional, order maintainer, problem solver, peacekeeper. We proudly accept these tremendous responsibilities, serving our city and each other, working for each and every one of our community members to the best of our abilities and with the highest level of integrity.

Without question, our employees are our most valuable asset. Without them, we would not have enjoyed the strides in training, policy and administrative review and community outreach that we have attained. SPD has dedicated and exceptional staff who are committed to improving every day. I could not be more proud of the men and women of our department who serve Spokane every day in so many different ways. It is a true honor to be a part of this agency and see the evolution we have made and will continue to make as we serve our community.



Chief Craig N. Meidl
Spokane Police Department



MISSION Statement

The Spokane Police Department is committed to providing excellence in policing, enhancing the safety and security of individuals, and building partnerships to better the lives of our community members as a whole.

VISION Statement

Our vision is to serve every member of our community with professionalism, integrity and compassion so that with every interaction we continue to build trust, preserve safety and model ethical policing.

Our VALUES:

- **Integrity:** adherence to ethical principles; soundness of character, honesty
- **Professionalism:** holding to the highest and most effective standards of the law enforcement profession while continually pursuing progressive improvement through education, training and experience.
- **Compassion:** a feeling of concern and understanding for an individual's distress, accompanied by a desire to help.

The following six strategic goals will provide direction for the next two years:

- Collaborative community approach in helping individuals experiencing behavioral health concerns obtain sustained assistance for long term benefit
- Help create a safer, healthier, and more supportive environment for all residents and visitors
- Focused vehicle theft reduction
- Crime reduction utilizing new and innovative programs
- Foster and strengthen community partnerships and relationships
- Develop and retain a qualified, diverse workforce



Numbers At-A-Glance

219,190

City Population



522,798

County Population



339

Commissioned

79

Civilian Support
Employees

7

Exempt
Commissioned & Civilian

66

Volunteers

239,489

Total Calls for Service

40,707

Officer Initiated



\$205.3 M

City Budget
(General Fund)

\$63.6 M

Police Department
Budget (General Fund)



Collaborative approach in helping individuals experiencing behavioral health concerns

Providing an integrated community response is key to providing individuals the right care in the right setting. In the fall of 2018, several Frontier Behavioral Health clinicians were partnered with SPD officers assigned to Patrol to manage and connect vulnerable populations with resources to address underlying and chronic behavioral health issues. One year of data from the program shows that 1,049 individuals were served, with over 70% of those being diverted from jail or emergency departments.

Due to the success of this program, SPD has created a dedicated Behavioral Health Unit in collaboration with the Spokane County Sheriff's Office and Frontier Behavioral Health. The unit includes a sergeant who supervises two officers from SPD and two deputies from SCSO. Each officer and deputy has a Frontier Behavioral Health clinician partner working with them, and the teams will be dedicated to assisting individuals in crisis to stay out of jails and emergency departments, as well as helping access mental health services and other resources for long-term care.

In addition to providing more effective and immediate assistance to the person in need, these co-deployed teams are able to relieve pressure on hospital emergency rooms, free officers from long waits often associated with the patient admittance and provide a more focused and effective level of service individualized to the person in crisis.

Spokane Police Officers work on a daily basis with a variety of vulnerable citizens, including homeless individuals and others suffering from behavioral health illnesses and/or addiction. Officers collaborate regularly with outreach providers including SNAP, House of Charity, Hotspotters, Volunteers of America, Frontier Behavioral Health and numerous others. The result is an integrated approach to dealing with this portion of our community needing specialized resources. Officers are equipped with reference material containing information regarding the myriad of resources available and they routinely connect citizens to these resources during their daily duties.

One of the key partners in this effort is the Downtown Community Court. Their mission is as follows:

The Spokane Municipal Community Court seeks to reduce and properly address quality-of-life offenses in the downtown area by utilizing a collaborative, problem-solving approach to crime. Via partnership with numerous government, community and faith-based organizations, the SMCC endeavors to hold defendants accountable, address factors impacting defendants' criminal behavior, improve the quality of life in the downtown area, address victim needs, and increase public confidence in the local criminal justice system (p. 6 SMCC policies and procedures).

When officers working downtown or northeast Spokane contact defendants for quality of life offenses, they refer the defendants to community court rather than traditional municipal court. As part of the community court process, defendants are referred to the appropriate services as determined by a needs assessment. To facilitate this process, a large number of service providers are assembled on site for each community court session. Additionally, downtown officers will often refer citizens they contact downtown to community court specifically to access these services, even in the absence of a criminal violation.



Help create a safer, healthier, and more supportive environment for all residents and visitors

As part of the city's "One Spokane" strategic plan, an Illegal Camping Pod was created in May of 2019 to create a safer, healthier and more supportive environment for all residents and visitors. Three Spokane Police Department Neighborhood Resource Officers are assigned to locate and abate illegal encampments. The NRO's are partnered with City Code Enforcement and City Litter Crews, who often clean up to a thousand pounds of litter from these camps a day. This team approach speeds up the cleanup of illegal camps and refers people who are illegally camping to community resources. The new team approach has reduced the number of days to resolve a camping complaint from thirteen days down to four days. In the seven months since the program was started, the team has responded to 972 reports of illegal camping and removed 152,000 pounds of trash and debris. Social service outreach teams also work with individuals who are camping to provide referrals to community resources.

A healthy vibrant downtown is essential to any city's growth, prosperity and ability to attract new investors. Additionally, nuisance calls and concerns with growing street populations has created significant concern to downtown business owners, shoppers and tourists. With the passage of the Public Safety Levy in 2019, SPD is adding five officers and one sergeant to help ensure those visiting downtown can do so in a safe environment by providing higher staffing levels, quicker response times, and increased visibility. In addition, we will also be adding an NRO to the North Precinct and the South Precinct to help provide a more timely response to issues related to abandoned houses, homeless camps, nuisance houses and drug houses.

SPD has a long-term goal of forming a permanent cadre assigned to the Illegal Camping Pod.

Focused Vehicle Theft Reduction

In 2017, SPD launched a major initiative, the Vehicle Theft Task Force (VTTF). Vehicle thefts across the State of Washington, but more specifically in the Spokane region, have continued to create frustration amongst our community. To formulate this task force, we re-aligned already existing resources. A Police Anti-Crime Team (PACT) worked with the Targeted Crimes Unit (TCU) detective to provide specific targeted efforts towards Spokane's vehicle thieves. The PACT unit works as the pro-active arm of this task force using a variety of tactics and strategies to find and arrest these thieves. The TCU detective(s) work as the liaison for PACT in regards to filing of charges, first appearances, bond hearings and sentencing hearings.

In order to obtain useful data and be able to effectively evaluate this initiative, the department will continue the focused efforts of the VTTF for another two years. After that time, we will evaluate the data to determine if the task force efforts should be expanded or shifted to other neighborhood crime issues.

In 2019, Washington passed a law that authorizes a pilot program for community supervision for offenders who commit motor vehicle-related felonies. Community supervision can add structure for offenders and connect them with services including drug treatment, education, housing and job training. Focused, collaborative law enforcement efforts and community supervision can increase public safety. The City of Spokane led this statewide program to a successful conclusion.



Crime reduction utilizing new innovative programs

SPD is committed to consistently researching best practices as we tackle various crime, quality of life and nuisance issues. In addition to community court collaboration, we continue to explore other avenues to create a safer and healthier Spokane. With the 2019 Public Safety levy passage, we will be adding three property crimes detectives, which will allow more focus on chronic and repeat offenders who are creating a disproportionate amount of crime by increasing the number of workable cases that are assigned.

Since Washington is the only state in the nation without property crime supervision upon release of the offender, SPD has collaborated with city leaders to engage Olympia in property crime supervision. Though property crime supervision can be expensive, the alternative is to pass these costs on to the community through recidivism of offenders. We believe there is too much at stake and will continue our efforts to encourage our legislators to bring property crime supervision back.

Additionally, we continue to work with City leaders to develop a program allowing municipal courts to use tools that District and Federal courts do not otherwise have available. The goal is to choose a group of repeat and chronic offenders that continue to victimize our community with no concern for repercussions and provide focused efforts at changing behavior. These efforts may include increased sentencing, intense supervision or other methods aligning the needs of the offender with best outcomes for the community. What we know is that some offenders have no desire to change their behavior while others do not have resources available to help them align their behavior with the lawful expectations of the community.

SPD has over 113 unsolved homicides going back to the 1950's. The total number of unsolved 1st degree rape cases is over 200. Also, as the 1500+ sexual assault kits (SAK) are tested by WSP, we anticipate getting several hits on solvable sexual assault cases. There are over 15 missing person cases going back to the early 1970's that were never assigned to a detective, along with 5+ unidentified human remains cases. Cold cases are important and remain active, and as such, they often cannot be specifically discussed. Our Major Crimes Unit currently conducts limited work on cold cases as capacity allows.

Innovations in technology and the way it is used for criminal investigations has greatly affected the solvability of many cold cases. SPD has made a significant investment in independent familial DNA testing associated with a number of local unsolved homicides. This approach has been instrumental in the successful investigation/resolution of a number of cold case crimes across the country. Advances in fingerprint identification (NGI) has increased the solvability of cold cases dramatically as well. The FBI is recommending resubmitting all fingerprints prior to 1993 to be compared to its database.

SPD is preparing for an increasingly digital landscape by developing a digital forensic lab within the Technical Assistance Response Unit. Digital Evidence has increased dramatically as both devices and internet access become more accessible and more affordable, and it is present in 80 – 90% of all criminal cases. Digital Evidence includes photos, videos, and data from a variety of devices like computers, tablets, and smartphones. The goals of the lab include:

1. **Defensible, Secure Process:** Process digital evidence using a secure, standard methodology that is defensible in court. Ensure chain of custody is easily documented and devices are always secure.
2. **Accredited Digital Forensic Lab:** Develop a digital forensic lab to accreditation standards in order to provide the highest quality evidence in support of investigations staff.
3. **Streamlined Processing:** Improve digital forensic evidence processing to reduce the time it takes for an investigator to receive evidence. Improve communication about the process.
4. **Invest in Training:** Invest in staff to ensure that forensic experts continue to build on existing skills and are aware of new techniques and trends.



Foster community partnerships and relationships

SPD is committed to continual quality engagement with the community throughout all aspects of our Department. One Sergeant and two officers are assigned to the Community Outreach Unit. These officers employ long term strategies at a deeper level of community engagement and outreach, helping to maintain our relationships with our partner organizations, minority outreach groups (NAACP, MLK Center, Native Project, World Relief, etc.) and special interest groups. In addition, Community Outreach oversees the Youth and Police Initiative (YPI) and the Police Activities League (PAL); we've had over 600 teens graduate from YPI and 2383 participants in the PAL program.

An example of events or meetings attended by the Community Outreach Unit include various community forums, Spokane Pride Parade, World Refugee Day, Unity in the Community, Cops and Kids Car Show, Spokane Interstate Fair, Touch a Truck, Youth and the Force (partnership with Juvenile Corrections), monthly refugee provider meetings, refugee orientations, Native Project Open House, Native Project Wellness Nights, Salvation Army's Back to School effort, Shop with a Cop and so many more.

A substantial amount of time is spent by the Community Outreach Unit participating in YPI and PAL. YPI is a weeklong program conducted each month of the school year on a rotational basis at different schools throughout Spokane. Each session lasts five days and provides an opportunity for at risk youth to engage with officers and for officers to engage with the youth. The theme of YPI is breaking down barriers and stereotypes to help open lines of communication between at-risk youth and Spokane police officers. The program has grown in popularity at Spokane Public Schools and continues to encourage both youth and officers alike.

PAL is a summer program led by SPD that occurs at three different parks, one day per week per park, over the course of six weeks. The ages of participants vary from elementary to junior high school. Different activities are offered, including basketball, baseball, STEM activities, soccer and running. Officers take the role of mentors and coaches while interacting with the youth. PAL provides youth of Spokane a safe place to enjoy summertime activities while engaging with officers. The Police Department partners with organizations to make PAL possible, including the Spokane School District, Spokane Public Library, community leaders and many others. In addition, participation in PAL from different community groups grows substantially each year. In addition to mentoring and connecting with youth, the PAL program also seeks to instill in attendees respect for others, courtesy, patience and good teamwork.

Throughout the year the Community Outreach Unit coordinates YPI/PAL sustainability events where youth are taken to baseball games, hockey games, snowshoeing, and many other positive activities. These activities outside the YPI and PAL programs allow the attendees and officers to stay connected and continue the relationships they have forged throughout the programs.

As of 2017, SPD has made attending YPI or PAL mandatory for probationary police officers. Additionally, the Chief of Police or the Community Outreach Unit attend each post-academy to talk about the importance of community based policing and connecting with the community during every contact.

We at SPD believe that community engagement is the responsibility of every employee and volunteer of the Department, every day, during every interaction a community member has with SPD. This is constantly reinforced through public recognition of those officers receiving accolades from the community, statements of expectations with all candidates interested in joining the SPD team, formal Department awards recognizing those officers who engaged in noteworthy efforts, and promotion of those who embody our efforts to connect with community.



Develop and retain qualified, diverse workforce

Employee Wellness: Beginning in 2018, the Department has begun to specifically and intentionally incorporate employee wellness training into its training philosophy, including in-service training for all employees. Additionally, we have updated protocols for officer-involved shootings and critical incidents to ensure we are taking care of the mental health of our employees who are involved in critical, stressful and dangerous encounters.

Safety: All officers receive training in first aid when hired. Other training includes: use of force tactics, firearms, de-escalation, and patrol procedures. Throughout the year, the department provides refresher training in each of those areas. Additionally, specialized medical equipment is issued to every patrol officer, including Quik-clot, Narcan and tourniquets. These tools have already been used multiple times to save lives of community members, prior to more substantial first aid arriving.

Development: The Academy organizes monthly supervisor training to allow briefing of supervisors concerning current topics or trends that impact operations. SPD also holds monthly Senior Staff meetings for all department mid-managers and above with the goal of discussing current issues that directly impact the Department, the community or processes and procedures that need to be revised. This also allows mid-managers to bring forward concerns, rumors or issues at a standing meeting, allowing clear direction to be given.

The Washington State Training Commission mandates every law enforcement officer exercising general police authority in Washington State at the local, county or state level, attend a minimum of 24 hours of training per year. Every commissioned officer attends a minimum of two in-service training days per year; other training occurs at roll calls, meetings, or utilizing on-line tools. In-service trainings allow structured, consistent and mandated refresher training, reality based training, updated certifications (firearms, defensive tactics), emergency vehicle operation, case law updates, and many more topics that employees use throughout their jobs. SPD has re-instituted in-service training for non-commissioned employees surrounding general department updates, policies, procedures, wellness and other topics to improve communication, performance and effectiveness.



Crisis Intervention Training (CIT): Every officer hired by SPD obtains 40 hours of CIT training within their first year of employment, which is above and beyond what is required by the state. Each new employee also participates in a 4-hour immersion with a behavioral health provider in the Spokane area during their first year to enhance their knowledge of the behavioral health system, resources available, and to improve their skills in addressing individuals with behavioral health concerns. Each employee also must recertify every year to maintain their certification through the Washington State Training Commission.

The goal of CIT is to improve officer and citizen safety, as well as to divert appropriate candidates into treatment rather than into the criminal justice system due to their illness-related behavior.

Enhanced Crisis Intervention Training (E-CIT): E-CIT takes CIT to the next level. E-CIT members receive an additional 40 hours of Enhanced CIT training. They also meet regularly to review their performance and participate in additional training in motivational interviewing, de-escalation tactics, and scenario based training on resolving crisis situations. The E-CIT members are limited in number and are primarily drawn from Patrol. These officers work closely with mental health providers and help drive the training for the rest of the CIT program.

Recruiting efforts: Recruiting efforts are focused on attracting quality candidates from diverse backgrounds. SPD Officers attend Public Safety Tests throughout the state to make personal connections with candidates as they arrive and encourage them to apply with SPD. This has resulted in many more applicants sending their scores to SPD and considering Spokane Police as an option for employment. The Academy seeks to engage with our local community on various platforms to provide information on careers in law enforcement. In addition to attending PST's, SPD attends career fairs and continually provides information on becoming a SPD Officer through Social Media.

The Academy works to build effective communication with local and regional institutions of higher learning to recruit police candidates from educational disciplines in Criminal Justice and outside of traditional majors related to criminal justice. These aforementioned ongoing efforts continue to encourage a broad spectrum of persons to explore a career with SPD.

The goal of diversifying the department will take many years but we have embarked on a focused effort to do so.



Conclusion

Failure to evolve and grow is unhealthy for any organization. The Spokane Police Department will continue to evolve, remain flexible and pursue best practices, both in our police programs, engagement with the community, crime fighting tactics, internal welfare of our employees, training, and policies and procedures. We will continue our efforts to be a progressive police department and maintain flexibility to meet ever-changing demands placed on our community and police department. No police department is successful without the support of its community, and our efforts to strengthen and foster relationships with the community on a daily basis under the umbrella of mutual respect, fairness, and transparency will be the lens we use for every interaction.

Spokane Police Department
1100 W. Mallon Ave.
Spokane, WA 99260

Spokane Police North Precinct:
509-363-8281

Crime Stoppers:
800-222-Tips (8477)

Spokane Police Downtown Precinct:
509-622-5823

Drug House & Drug Activity Hotline:
509-363-8210

Spokane Police South Precinct:
509-625-3330

Gang Tip Hotline:
509-625-GANG

Crime Check:
509-456-2233

Graffiti Hotline:
509-456-2233

