

STRATEGIC PLAN
ARKANSAS CITY POLICE
DEPARTMENT
2015–2019





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MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF

Strategic planning is an organization's process for determining its future direction and allocating resources to pursue that direction. In order to determine where it is going, an organization first needs to know where it is at the moment and how it intends to go about getting to a new place. The resultant document is called the strategic plan.

Beginning in 2014 the Arkansas City Police Department gathered internal and external input by meeting with employees, civic groups, and participating in town hall meetings as well as conducting public surveys. At the same time a complete inventory and inspection of equipment and facilities was completed. Information obtained over a seven month period was used to determine the department's strengths, weakness, opportunities, and threats and provided guidance for the development of the 2015 – 2019 strategic plan.

The plan will be updated as needed by the Department's command staff. The information contained in the plan must be readily available to provide guidance to each police employee. It also should be accessible to the City's elected officials and the public. As such, the plan will be available on our web site, Facebook page, annual report, and at our station.

The Department's Mission Statement, Core Values and Goals are all integral parts of the strategic plan. But no less important are the organization's plans to confront the public safety challenges anticipated to occur over the next 5 years. Experience has shown that even limiting the scope of the plan to five years will almost certainly include surprises and unexpected challenges. For that reason, the Department must remain flexible in its response to new scenarios. In order to be truly useful, a strategic plan must allow for change.

A strategic plan must be much more than a cataloging of anticipated problems and a wish list of additional people and things, even though resources are a key part of the planning process. The plan must recognize that fiscal realities will dictate that not every desired resource will be available nor will every goal be attained. Choices will have to be made and priorities set. That, too, is part of strategic planning.

The Arkansas City Police Department's reason for existing is to improve the quality of life for the city's residents by increasing their sense of safety and well-being and providing them with exceptional customer service. That overarching purpose is reflected in the Department's Mission Statement. The organization's listing of its Core Values helps to describe how its members will carry out those tasks. The below listed plan contains many tasks which will be challenging and I realize we are in for a busy and productive few years ahead. I have the utmost faith in our employees; they give of their time and talents to make Arkansas City a great place to live.

MISSION STATEMENT

Service, justice, and fundamental fairness are the foundational principles of the Arkansas City Police Department's mission to enhance the quality of life for all citizens. We will accomplish this mission by treating everyone equally with respect, dignity, and courtesy. We will reduce crime, enhance traffic safety, and make Arkansas City a pleasant place to work and live while continually building a greater bond between the department and the public we serve.

CORE VALUES

Accountability - Acting responsibly

Character - Maintaining moral excellence

Pride - Committed to perfection

Dedication - Self-sacrificing devotion

OUR PROMISE

To do the right thing

To do the best we can, and

To treat others the way we want to be treated

DEPARTMENT PHILOSOPHY

The Department's philosophy is based upon several basic, guiding principles. A basic principle includes the vision that community policing means the Department and the Arkansas City community must address public safety and quality of life issues as equal partners. This realization means the police can never succeed in their duties if they operate as an occupying army. Officers must have the support and cooperation of the citizens they serve if they are to succeed as effective guardians of the public safety.

The Department's philosophy recognizes that while crime prevention and crime suppression are equally important components of the ACPD mission, preventing a crime from occurring in the first place is always to be preferred over solving it. Preventing crime through its various programs and practices always will be an emphasis of the Arkansas City Police Department.

Our philosophy recognizes that the people of Arkansas City are our customers and are our reason for existing as an organization. The Department's goal is to provide exceptional customer service to the citizens of Arkansas City. This goal is reflected in our admonition to our employees: To do the right thing, to do the best we can, and to treat others the way we want to be treated. Finally, an integral part of ACPD's philosophy mandates that we always endeavor to recruit and hire only the best sworn and civilian employees to serve the citizens of Arkansas City. The Department will provide these carefully-selected people with comprehensive and continuing training to assure they are the best at their respective jobs. We also pledge to employ only those professionals whose integrity and ethical principles meet the high expectations of this community.

Beyond these general philosophies, a strategic plan spells out the future challenges the organization expects to encounter and how it hopes to meet them with both effectiveness and efficiency. Those anticipated challenges and how the Arkansas City Police Department intends to cope with them over the next 5 years are identified next.

BEST PRACTICES

Police Departments must routinely review and update their policies and procedures due to the fact laws, court decisions, and advancements occur constantly. Police work has become increasingly complex and officers need more guidance to execute their duties correctly. Typically the actions taken by police that have the highest risk are also actions which are not performed on a frequent basis. All decisions and actions by the police can have a significant impact on the community we serve. The Arkansas City Police Department pledges to continually review standard operating procedures to ensure best practices are in place and that the employees have proper guidance in their decision making.

ACTION STEPS

Review and revise, as appropriate, all department policies and practices with an emphasis on low frequency/high risk activities.

Undertaking a complete review of all policies and procedures is an extremely complex and time consuming effort. To ensure this need is addressed, the Arkansas City Police Department will assign a staff member to be dedicated full time to coordinate efforts beginning in 2015. Working with internal and external partners, the supervisor will complete a full review and revision within a 36 month period. The supervisor will also be required to establish a review schedule for future updates with an emphasis on high risk/low frequency activities.

Focus internal and external training efforts to provide employees with an opportunity to become proficient with the decision making process with an emphasis on high risk/low frequency.

State law requires officers receive a minimum of 40 hours of training each year to remain certified as a law enforcement officer. The type of training officers receive is more important than the number of hours an officer receives. High risk/low frequency events may only occur once during an officer's career. To be properly prepared, officers should continually practice and review policies related to these events. The Arkansas City Police Department is committed to providing officers with relevant practical and classroom training in an effort to prepare them for proper decision making. To that end, the Arkansas City Police Department will have a training committee with employee representation from across the department. The committee will meet quarterly to review past training and identify future training needs. A written training committee report will be completed by the committee chairman biannually.



PERSONNEL RESOURCES

The success of any organization depends upon its people. During the period of this strategic plan, the Arkansas City Police Department will seek to hire the very best applicants and prepare them to excel as employees of the City. We also will emphasize the continued development of our tenured employees. We recognize that in the hiring, training and assignment of employees, their earned reputation for honesty and integrity as positive role models in the community is at least as important as their technical skills.

ACTION STEPS

Review and revise the Department's officer recruitment process with an emphasis on recruiting applicants who reflect the diversity of the community.

The Department recognizes there are identifiable differences in potential police employees on the job market today. It also recognizes these potential applicants are accessing different media in their job searches, and in many cases are seeking different job rewards. As a result the Department will examine all facets of the recruiting process and make revisions as necessary.

Review and revise, as appropriate, the selection criteria for both sworn and non-sworn employees, with an emphasis on education requirements.

The general and technical knowledge required to be a successful police officer is growing in volume and complexity every year. The same holds true for the Department's non-sworn positions. As a consequence, it is necessary for the Arkansas City Police Department to review its "entrance requirements" on a continuing basis to assure that only candidates demonstrating intelligence, integrity and good decision-making skills become City employees. Education, communications skills, and integrity will be emphasized.

Continue the Department's emphasis on integrity and ethical behavior from all employees.

Like exceptional customer service, an expectation for honesty, integrity, and ethical behavior is part of the foundation upon which the reputation of the Arkansas City Police Department rests. This expectation is reflected in the Department's stated values. Close attention to the Department's selection, promotion, and internal affairs processes will help assure that integrity remains ACPD's guiding watchword into the future. Further, the Department's leadership staff recognizes its obligation to role model exemplary ethical behavior in all actions internal and external to the Arkansas City Police Department.



Emphasize the importance of exceptional customer service with all Department employees.

The Department acknowledges the high standards of customer service expected by the citizens of Arkansas City and will strive to meet those expectations in the coming years. Introductory orientation to the Department, in-service training, and supervisory role modeling all will be used to solidify a commitment to exceptional customer service in the Department's culture and traditions.

To aid in employee retention, identify additional means of recognizing and rewarding exceptional work.

Employees everywhere like to hear they did a good job. Commendations issued to police employees by their supervisors are a common occurrence at ACPD. Commendations may range from a personal note from the Chief to an oral "good job" from a Sergeant in a briefing session. Nevertheless, the organization recognizes that additional means for rewarding exceptional work are a necessity in virtually every organization. The Arkansas City Police Department will establish an awards committee which will meet quarterly, or more frequently if needed, to review and recommend employees for formal awards and or recognition.

Upgrade psychological and peer support services available to all police employees.

The Department is aware the mental and emotional health of its workforce is critical to the efficiency and effectiveness of the organization. It is also the humane and "right" thing to do. To that end, the Department will research and implement a peer support system and critical incident response standard in an effort to assist all employees maintain or return to a state of positive emotional health.

Research and implement career development and mentoring programs.

The Department acknowledges its responsibility to assist its employees in their development. To that end, ACPD will research what is available in both career development and mentoring programs and devise a process that is practical and beneficial for employees willing to commit the requisite time and effort.

Research and develop a succession planning process.

Preparing the next generation of leaders at all levels of the agency is an important responsibility of every quality-driven organization. The command staff of ACPD will work with the City's Human Resources Department in developing an effective succession planning and preparation process linked to our career development initiatives.

As part of the Department's overall training program, develop and implement a leadership training process for supervisory personnel.

The Arkansas City Police Department recognizes that its first-line supervisors play an important role in the organization. We also acknowledge the critical role played by the agency's mid-managers. In recognition of that fact, the Department pledges to develop and implement a leadership or supervisory training track to supplement our other training endeavors.

ORGANIZATION

Reporting and supervisory chains of command are important to the success of any contemporary organization. Who reports to whom, who supports whom, and where accountability belongs must be clear if that organization is to be successful in carrying out its mission.

The Department command staff will review the agency's organization chart regularly and revisions will continue to be made in order to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of each work unit of the organization.

ACTION STEPS

Conduct a periodic review of the Department's organization chart to assure maximum efficiency, effectiveness and accountability.

The City's crime picture and customer service needs are subject to change on a continuing basis. The Department must change periodically in order to meet a changing environment and circumstances. At times that will mean making adjustments to the structure of the organization itself. The Department's command staff will examine the organization's structure on an annual basis and make revisions as indicated.



CRIME PREVENTION

Good cops like solving crimes. At the same time, we recognize that preventing someone from becoming a victim in the first place is much better than catching the offender afterward. Over the next five years the Department will expand its public information and crime prevention education efforts. A citizenry educated in crime prevention tactics is a proven component of community oriented policing. The Arkansas City Police Department will continue to work with our citizen-customers in an ongoing endeavor to prevent crime.

ACTION STEPS

Reinvigorate the City's Neighborhood Watch programs.

Nationwide, Neighborhood Watch is the most effective crime prevention and crime suppression program in existence. It causes the average citizen to think about and participate in crime prevention activities. It plays a big part in crime suppression because it trains citizens to be good observers and report suspicious circumstances to police. The Department will increase the effectiveness of Neighborhood Watch in Arkansas City by expanding the number of participating neighborhoods and re-enlisting the active support of previously established Neighborhood Watch programs.

Build an active Business Watch program for commercial interests.

The City is a strong supporter of economic development in Arkansas City. The Police Department's role in that endeavor is to assure businesses that Arkansas City is a good and safe place for commerce. One way in which the Department attempts to do that is by providing accurate and timely crime prevention information and advice to the local business community. The Department recognizes that it must strengthen its relationship with the Arkansas City business community. One means of increasing cooperation and communication among businesses as well as between the businesses and their police department is the Business Watch program.

Utilize the Internet and Social Media to disseminate crime prevention information.

Today's world turns to the internet and its related electronic media for news and information of all kinds. Social media such as Facebook is an example of this quickly-expanding, instant-communication universe. The Police Department recognizes that it must use the information superhighway to communicate important information to the public.

Continue and improve youth programs as a way to reduce crime and improve community relations.

The Arkansas City Police Department has School Resource Officers, participates in the DARE program, and hosts a DARE camp. These programs help shape the future of Arkansas City's youths so they will grow into productive adult citizens with a willingness to work with the Police Department. ACPD will continually look for new and innovative ways to engage and work with the youth of Arkansas City.

Reinforce with all personnel the importance of problem-solving partnerships with the community.

As noted previously, contemporary law enforcement officers do not constitute an occupying force but rather must work in partnership with members of the community in order to be truly effective in public safety and order maintenance duties. To be successful in this endeavor all ACPD employees must be aware of this need for cooperation and collaboration. The concept of a problem-solving partnership will be emphasized in the Department's training curriculum and will be reinforced by leadership staff.

CRIME SUPPRESSION

The Arkansas City Police Department recognizes that not all crime can be prevented and efforts to identify and arrest offenders must be a focus for a successful Police Department. A blend of reactive and proactive methods to address criminal activity tends to be most productive. In most cities in America, the bulk of the crime is committed by a small percentage of the population. Enforcement programs and efforts which focus on repeat offenders are effective in reducing crime rates. Identifying, developing cases, and successfully prosecuting repeat offenders in an effort to remove them from the community will be a priority for the Arkansas City Police Department.

ACTION STEPS

Blend “hot spot policing” and “intelligence-led policing” into the Department’s philosophy of community-oriented policing.

The Arkansas City Police Department follows a philosophy of community-oriented policing that emphasizes the vital partnership that exists between communities and the law enforcement officers that serve them. From time to time, new concepts in policing emerge that, once proven effective, can be melded into an overall policing strategy. “Hot spot policing” which emphasizes placing additional resources into high-crime areas is one such addition. The “hot spots” are identified through analysis of the statistics and other data determined through intelligence gathering. This practice is termed “intelligence-led policing.” Command staff will review monthly the deployment and enforcement practices of each shift to ensure efforts are aimed at reducing crime rates.

Department-wide emphasis on the arrest and prosecution of known career criminals.

The Police Department will concentrate enforcement efforts on chronic offenders into the foreseeable future. The Department's ultimate goal will be the elimination of major crime and the reduction of property crimes within the city of Arkansas City.

Determine where affordable technology can assist the Department in its crime suppression efforts.

Today there is a steadily growing number of areas in which new technology can impact, in a positive manner, the effectiveness and efficiency of patrol officers and investigators in their pursuit of criminals. Some of this technology is, however, quite expensive. The Department recognizes its obligations to the citizens of Arkansas City to be both excellent crime fighters and fiscally responsible professionals. The Department's leaders acknowledge these equally important needs and will balance them accordingly.

TRAFFIC SAFETY

Most citizens of Arkansas City have a greater risk of being injured or killed due to an automobile accident than as a result of a violent crime. There has long been an established link between traffic enforcement efforts and the number and severity of traffic accidents. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the police department to focus its efforts on ensuring traffic laws are obeyed by the community we serve.

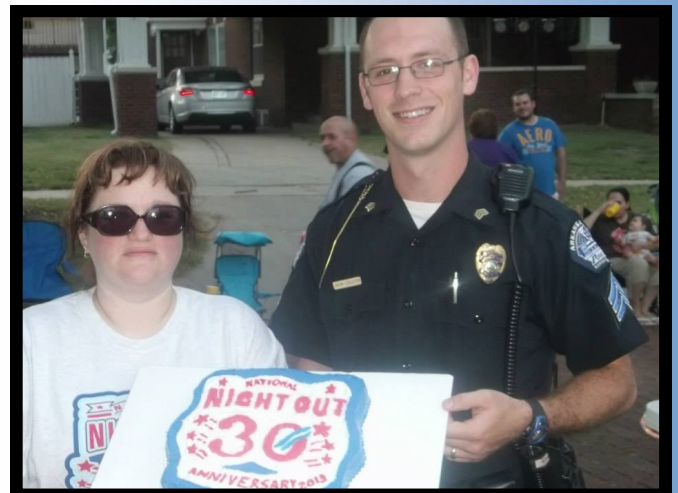
ACTION STEPS

Participate in state wide enforcement campaigns.

The Arkansas City Police Department pledges to collaborate with other agencies in an effort to effectively enforce traffic laws and make the citizens safer. One way is to work in conjunction with agencies such as KDOT to promote the use of seat belts, reduce distractions, and obey speed limits. Informational media campaigns will occur prior to any such enforcement campaign in an effort to gain voluntary cooperation by the citizens.

Use intelligence-led methods to determine traffic enforcement needs.

Police Departments are often criticized for issuing tickets as a way to raise money for the City. Traffic enforcement in areas with little to no accidents oftentimes leads to this perception. The Arkansas City Police Department pledges to regularly review accident report information and deploy resources in those areas experiencing higher numbers of crashes. Command staff will review monthly the deployment and enforcement practices of each shift to ensure efforts are aimed at reducing the number and severity of accidents.



TECHNOLOGY AND EQUIPMENT

It is an established principle of management that successful organizations work smarter, not just harder. Today technology can help a law enforcement organization work smarter. The Arkansas City Police Department will seek to use Information Technology and other equipment-related advances to aid its officers in working with greater efficiency, effectiveness, and safety. The Department will pursue updated technology and equipment with the understanding that very real financial constraints exist that will govern what ACPD can do and when in this regard.

ACTION STEPS

Research, obtain, and maintain the most effective less-lethal force options.

Officers of the Arkansas City Police Department are ethically and legally mandated to utilize the minimum amount of force required to bring a dangerous and violently resisting individual under control. ACPD currently employs a number of less-lethal technologies to accomplish that goal. However, new developments in technology regularly offer new equipment options intended to increase the safety of citizens, officers, and offenders. The Department will closely monitor ongoing research and less-lethal technology developments and pursue those that are proven worthwhile.

Establish a realistic replacement schedule for the Department's vehicle fleet.

As the Department's vehicle fleet ages, vehicles begin to amass higher than desirable maintenance expenses. The Department realizes that both officer safety and employee morale are affected by the condition of the vehicle that serves as a police officer's "office" each workday. The Department also recognizes the cost of replacing these expensive pieces of equipment. ACPD will work closely with City management to adopt a reasonable replacement schedule.

Research in-vehicle technology that will increase the safety, efficiency and effectiveness of police officers. Obtain proven technology as finances permit.

Advanced computers, ticket printers, in-car and body worn cameras, license plate scanners, fingerprint readers, are all examples of new technology that is becoming available to boost the effectiveness, efficiency and safety of police officers. Most of this advanced technology can be mounted in a police car or carried on an officer's person. The Department acknowledges its responsibility to provide its employees with the technology required to do a good (and safe) job. But the Department's leaders also are aware of financial constraints and the reality that other City departments have significant technological needs, too. The Department will monitor technological developments in the criminal justice field and seek to obtain affordable technology that will make tangible contributions to employee efficiency, effectiveness, and safety in the field.

Update radio communication equipment.

The current status of the analog emergency communication radio equipment in Cowley County is critical. A radio system needs assessment was conducted in 2014 and recommend replacement of the current system with a UHF analog simulcast system with plans to convert to a P25 simulcast system in the next five years. Estimated cost county wide to replace the current system infrastructure with a UHF analog simulcast system is \$2,432,100. Moving to a new UHF analog simulcast system will not require the replacement of mobile and hand held radios immediately. The Arkansas City Police Department uses mobile radios in all department vehicles and officers are assigned individual portable units. With the P25 simulcast system a goal in five years, the Arkansas City Police Department should consider phasing in P25 radios over the next five years to lessen the financial impact upon the Department and City. Costs for P25 radios can be as high as \$3000 each.

SUMMARY

No strategic plan ever conceived could hope to take into account every possible influence and nuance that even a period as short as five years might bring. For that reason, a strategic plan must be regarded as a living document, subject to revision. At the same time, an organization that operates on a 100% reactive basis without making even an attempt to prepare for the future is doomed to wander in relative ineffectiveness.

By the very nature of its role, law enforcement always will have to devote a significant portion of its resources to reactive measures intended to serve the public safety. At the same time the Arkansas City Police Department pledges to engage in planning aimed at serving and protecting the people of Arkansas City in the most efficient, effective, and responsible way feasible. We will continue to gather input from the community to gage whether we are meeting the goals of this plan. Additionally, the ACPD will inform the community of Arkansas City of our progress each year through the publication of an annual report.

Acknowledgements

“The first responsibility of a leader is to define reality. The last is to say thank you. In between, the leader is a servant” – Max De Pree

The Department would be remiss in not recognizing the hard work and dedication of the members of the Arkansas City Police Department who brought this plan to fruition. We acknowledge all of your valuable contributions and thank you for your participation in this Strategic Plan.

This document is also available on our website at www.arkcity.org/Police and on our Facebook page, Arkansas City Police Department. Printed copies can be obtained by contacting our Records Division.

Comments are welcome and can be submitted to:

Arkansas City Police Department

117 West Central Ave.

Arkansas City, KS 67005

